

LETTERS  
*From* FROM *Gray*  
ITALY,

DESCRIBING THE  
Manners, Customs, Antiquities, Paintings,  
&c. of that Country,

In the Years MDCCLXX and MDCCLXXI,

T O

A FRIEND residing in FRANCE.

By an ENGLISH WOMAN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

V O L. III.

D U B L I N:

Printed for W. WATSON, D. CHAMBERLAINE,  
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BEATTY, J. EXSHAW and C. TALBOT.

MDCCLXXVI.

# LETTERS FROM ITALY

DESCRIBING THE  
Manners, Customs, Antiquities, Buildings,  
&c. of that Country.

In the Year 1644.

TO

A FRIEND IN FRANCE



IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. III.

DUBLIN.

Printed for W. Watson, D. Campbell,  
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MDCCLXXVI

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## LETTER XLI.

Rome, April 4th, 1771.

AT length the functions are finished; and now I may avail myself of the indulgence of sinning for three hundred years to come, having been in St. Peter's church every day during the *Sancta Settimana*; but it is to be apprehended the saint might cavil at a continuance in the error of heresy. However, there is a British lady here, a native of Caledonia, who has renounced her *protestant errors*, embraced the tenets of the old lady at Rome, and married a Roman marquis. She was so obliging as to lend the private theatre in her palace to the English, who gave therein a fine concert and collation; many of the nobility of Rome were present, and the Pope would have allowed the English to have danced, but they, from delicacy, as the permission extended no farther than to them as strangers, would not take advantage of his politeness. I have strayed from

the Functions, which ought, in order, to have taken place of this amusement.

I shall begin with those of Palm-sunday, and proceed to mention the most remarkable during the *Santa Settimana*. The ceremonies of Palm-sunday commence in the chapel at Monte Cavallo, where the Pope blesses the palms, and hears mass. Two sorts of cardinals are drawn up on each side of the altars; who are distinguished by the appellations of cardinal priests and cardinal deacons; their vestments violet colour, ornamented with ermine and lace. The ecclesiastics, their train-bearers, are seated at their feet. Just as the Function is about to begin, the cardinals take off their furs and outward drapery, and put on other vestments embroidered with gold, and adorn their heads with mitres made of silver tabby; then they rise and approach his Holiness, from whose hands they receive the palms; which, however, are not palm branches, but sprigs of box, as there are no palm-trees to be had. After several more ceremonies of rising up, sitting down, bowing, kneeling, stooping, standing, &c. &c. the procession begins; penitents, prelates, cardinals, &c. proceed, in due order to march, round the first great saloon of the palace (Monte Cavallo); then they reassume their violet and furr drapery, and assist at the mass which is sung.

fung. The passion is recited by two ecclesiastics; one narrates the words and accusation of Jesus Christ from the Evangelists, and the other answers for our blessed Saviour; the clamour and uproar of the Jews is imitated by the clergy.—After the cardinal, dean, and others have been complimented with incense, they embrace and salute each other, in imitation of the Kiss of Charity. A most curious procession makes part of this Function: the streets of Rome, through which it is to pass, are strewed with sand; and the pontiff, accompanied by the cardinals, makes a kind of public entry, in imitation of our Saviour's, into Jerusalem, mounted on mules, as is his Holiness; they bear branches of box-tree in their hands, and proceed, in the most ridiculous manner that can be imagined, to the Pantheon. Vain were the attempts to describe the horsemanship displayed on this occasion:—the obstinacy of the mules;—their kicking and curvetting;—the embarrassments arising from the cardinal's garments, which are like petticoats, &c. A litter, covered with crimson velvet, is provided for the Pope's use, in case his Holiness should come to the ground.

The next principal ceremony is the *Tenebræ* of the Holy Wednesday, performed at five o'clock afternoon in the chapel of

St. Paulina in the Vatican. The Pope is seated under a canopy; cardinals and bishops form on each side of him; and some cardinals take post in his front. Behind these, English and other foreign gentlemen are allowed to stand. About one third of the chapel is railed off with iron grates, which divide it into two parts, and here those ladies, foreigners and Italians, who have permission to be present, are stationed to see the ceremonies through the iron rails. It is, however, a great favour; for our names, I mean particularly us strangers, were wrote down, and the door-keepers held the list in their hands that there might be no mistake as to our identity, &c.

The *Tenebræ* are chanted as in other Roman-catholic churches, but executed with more judgment and by better voices. The *Miserere D'Allegri* concludes this Function, and is performed by vocal musicians only. I own I never heard music before. I supposed I had formed some idea of the powers and effects of the human voice; but had been conveyed blindfold into this chapel, and no intimation given me whence the sounds proceeded, I should have believed myself in Paradise. How then shall I attempt conveying to your mind the slightest idea of this celestial melody by any description? I must say no more, than that  
I have

I have heard enough to make me dissatisfied with the finest opera and the most perfect performers that are to be found out of the chapel of St. Paulina.

This chapel appears smaller than it really is, probably from the justness of its proportions. The cieling is vaulted and painted in fresco, as are the walls. The altar-piece and cieling by Michael Angelo: but the smoke of the lamps has so blackened his paintings, that the fine strokes of this great master are no longer discernible. Other painters have done the rest; who are equal sharers in the general obscurity. The tabernacle is of rock crystal; the columns of the altar of fine porphyry; they were taken from the Temple of Romulus. I was quite vexed when the charming vocal concert ended, and quitted this Function with regret.

The next day, which is Maundy Thursday, the morning service was performed with pomp, in St. Peter's church: the Pope officiated in person, and all the cardinals assisted. After the mass, which is chaunted in a small tribune, the sacrament is borne under a canopy, in procession, to the chapel of St. Paulina. The cardinals, in magnificent habits, and each carrying a large wax-taper lighted, come, two and two; and last of all, the Pope bareheaded; his mitre being borne before him on

a cushion of crimson velvet. The mitre is made of gold tiffue, and embroidered in a very close pattern, with small pearl and a few coloured precious stones, but none of great value; they appear thin and very ill set. The Pope's guards are under arms in casques, and with cuirasses beneath their habits.

: Just before the Pope passed by, I was desirous to know (as he must come very near us) whether or not we ought to curtsy, as is usual when other Princes proceed in grand ceremony. I asked one of the gentlemen of the chamber, or chamberlains, an abbe, who was our conductor; he replied, if you make a little curtsy, the Pope will esteem you well-bred and polite; but if you have any objection, he himself would be sorry you should put the least strain upon your inclination. I thought it better to inquire the ceremonial from this gentleman, than to apply to the *Marchesa Massimi*, and four or five Italian ladies, who, with two English and myself, composed the group. I curtsied to the Pontiff, as we all did, and he seemed well pleased. He has a piercing sensible countenance, which, when brightened by a smile, is full of benignity and complacence. As soon as the procession had passed us, we went to the chapel of

St.

St. Paulina, which was finely illuminated. The evening concluded with a *Miserere*.

From a room in the Vatican we were to see the Pope give the benediction. These windows look into one of the great courts of the palace. The Pontiff appears in a balcony in the centre of a portico of one of the principal fronts of St. Peter's, which commands this court. He is seated in a chair, and borne on the shoulders of twelve people; his mitre on his head, and the cardinals all attending upon him. Immediately upon his Holiness's appearance at the door which leads into the balcony, the full choir unite in a grand chorus—the foot and horse guards are all drawn up in the court—the space is filled by the Roman people—the air by their acclamations. The bells ring out from every church—the canons fire incessantly from the castle of St. Angelo. The redoubled echos from the banks of the Tiber, through the Vatican and St. Peter's, resemble a succession of the loudest thunder. On a signal given, all is instantly hushed to silence, and the Pontiff pronounces the benediction in a clear and audible voice. This present Pope (who is unquestionably the best that Rome could ever boast of) has made an extraordinary reform; for he never denounces the *anathema*, which all his predecessors have done before him; but in lieu thereof,

throws down from the balcony, instead of curses, some indulgences, wrote on slips of paper, which are scrambled for by the mob. Then the music choir, cannon, acclamations of the people, all recommence, and cease not till the Pope and cardinals quit the balcony, in which they remain but a short time. During this Function we were entertained with an elegant collation, consisting of chocolate, sweetmeats, and *maspinerie*, in great variety, and the best at Rome, which is superlatively famous for these sort of things. We then quitted the room, and I really believe we walked a mile through the apartments of the Vatican, in order to see the Pope wash the pilgrims' feet (as it is expressed) and serve them at table, &c.

At length we reached a tribune faced with gilt lattice, through which we looked into a large saloon; in this, upon a bench placed along one of the side walls, raised a step from the ground, and covered with carpets, are seated thirteen poor priests of different nations. The priest who sits in the middle represents our Saviour, and the six on each side of him his apostles. An Italian lady of our company spied one amongst them who had red hair, which occasioned much laughter; all, with one accord, pronounced him to be Judas. These priests are dressed in a kind of wrapper,  
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or *Robe de Chambre* of new white flannel, with a hood lined with white sattin, and caps of flannel like jelly-bags on their heads. They have wide trowsers of the same materials, tied down midway the leg, and socks of the same over their naked feet. The Pope enters, and seats himself in a purple great chair, elevated two or three feet from the ground. The cardinals bear his train; he himself is dressed more simply than usual with a stole, and a plain white sattin mitre. The saloon is filled with ecclesiastics of different orders; on one side is placed a desk and the choir: A priest gives the tone, and then the choiristers chant the chapter in St. Mark, which relates to the washing of the disciples' feet. The book of this Evangelist is then brought to the Pope, who kisses it, where open. One of the cardinals brings an apron (of old point, with a broad border of Mecklin lace) and ties it with a white ribbon round his Holiness's waist. He then descends from the chair, and approaches the poor priests, beginning with the nearest to him. A cardinal bears a large gold bason, another carries an ewer of the same metal, and a third napkins. The Pope stoops down, and the pretended pilgrim presents one foot (from which he has already drawn off the sock); his Holiness takes the foot.

in one hand, he who bears the ewer pours water over it, which is received in the gold basin held underneath; the Pope, with his hand, rubs and washes the foot; he then, with a napkin wipes it very cautiously and tenderly, till it is quite dry; that done, he kisses the instep; then presents the pilgrim with a *bouquet* and some money folded up in a paper: he proceeds, in order and silence, till he has washed a foot, &c. of each of the thirteen, who only bow their heads when the *bouquet* is given them, but do not speak or rise during the Function. The Pope, upon his return to his chair, is presented with water in a gold basin to wash his hands, which he does slightly and carelessly, he then joins his hands, shuts his eyes, and says a prayer softly to himself. After which he rises and goes out, in order to proceed to the hall where the pilgrims are to eat; the cardinals, &c. all do the same. We women all quitted our tribune, and were conducted by a different way to another tribune, into which we were locked up safe, and through the lattice saw a large hall, with a long table in the middle, on which was a furtout of looking-glass, with images of clay placed thereon, representing our Saviour and two loaves, with a serpent on a table: further St. Peter and other saints; the glass was ornamented with

with sweetmeats, olives, anchovies. There were thirteen silver plates laid, with spoons and forks; the napkins curiously plaited; and over the table-cloth a lay-over of clear lawn, pinched so as to form a very pretty pattern. I should have mentioned the dress of the images, which was the most taudry imaginable, of red, blue, and yellow porcelain. The pilgrims, whose feet had been washed, now made their appearance, and seated themselves along one side of the table; then entered the Pope and cardinals: a plate of boiled rice covered with cinnamon and sugar, was presented on the knee to his Holiness; he took it, and placed it before the pilgrim whose foot he had first washed; then another plate of the same, and so on till the thirteen were served. Then came a boiled herring, garnished with sallad, on a plate, and a succession of them till all were served as before. These were succeeded by plates of fried fish, cut to pieces; then plates of broccoli and cauliflower fricasseed in oil; the same ceremony observed as at first, and the quantity and quality of the viands exactly alike; then, on a magnificent salver, was brought a decanter of wine, another of water, and a gold goblet. The Pontiff filled the goblet almost full of wine, and, with an arch smile, dropped one drop of water into it, and

and presented it to the pilgrims as before. They each of them drank it off. This done, the Pope leaves the hall. I hoped these poor priests were not hungry, for had that been the case, they must have remained so; the dishes being removed from before them the moment after they had been placed there; but upon enquiry, I found they were all set by, and distributed to them after the Function was over, in another place and without so much ceremony.

During this Function, the Pope's guards stand in rank and file behind him, to keep the crowd from incommoding him. There were present a great number of Italian and English gentlemen, beside other foreigners. We then went to the hall where the cardinals were to eat. The figures placed on the glass were of the same materials, and draped in the same manner as those of the pilgrims' table; but in the middle was a different representation. A grove of palm-trees, formed of green paper, surrounded a paper mount, on which was a figure, placed to represent our Saviour, with a gilt goblet in his hand, alluding to the passion. But, to my great surprise, I perceived each end of the *furniture* to be terminated by two centaurs, of silver, gilt. This absurdity of mixing paganism with christianity seemed

seemed wonderful; nor could I account for it in any other manner, than by supposing these centaurs might allude to the incongruity and mixture of character of the company for whom the table had been prepared. I could expatiate upon the *Fable* of the centaurs, but that might transport me too far into antiquity from the present subject. The cardinals table was very differently served from that of the pilgrims, each having eight or ten covered dishes, brought from his own kitchen, with lamps under them: so that observing nothing curious or uncommon in this *Function* of their eminencies, we took our leave and returned home. As to the Pontiff, he always eats alone, and in the most temperate manner. He has a friend called *Francesco*, who buys his provisions in the market, and always from the same people. His constant dinner, excepting on fast days, consists of a soup with rice, which is served with the fowl that had been boiled in it. Then a small *Friture*, with a little *dessert* of cheese and fruit. This is all. And on the maigre and fast days he is extremely abstemious. His victuals are dressed by *Francesco*, in the room adjoining that in which he eats, and he himself brings it in. This caution is probably the result of an apprehension of poison. The only recreation the Pope allows himself,

self, is the going after dinner to the *Villa Patrizie fuori di Roma*, where, after taking a few turns in the garden, he plays a little at billiards in a room of the villa. Certainly no Pope ever led a more innocent life. But to return to the Function; Good-friday and Easter-eve, there are no extraordinary ceremonies. The common *Miserere* is chaunted; but in the evening the church of St. Peter is crouded with people, who walk about and converse. This beautiful temple has now an additional ornament, which produces a fine effect: a large cross, gently let down (by cords almost imperceptible to the eye) from the top of the dome, remains suspended during the night, but not near the ground; its distance from thence appearing to me to be about a third of the height of the church from the pavement to the top of the dome; it is composed of small lamps in strait rows, which throw out such a light as illuminates the great ayle, and appears as if composed of brilliant diamonds. It is remarkable that Friday and Saturday are not esteemed so sacred as the foregoing days of the holy week, and that during the said week no shops are shut; but trade and business go on just as usual.

Easter-sunday in the morning we went to St. Peter's, to see the Pope celebrate the  
mass

mass to a prodigious concourse of people; their numbers were supposed to be about ten thousand. I, as before, accompanied the Countess of Massimi; there were also some English ladies; chance brought us all together, and very near his Holiness; where we happened to fall into a line precisely before his guards. The gentlemen of our party were, by the accidental crowding, a good way behind us. There is a particular part of the service (the moment in which the host is elevated) at which all the people are to kneel; I had no time for reflection, but it struck me that as a protestant I ought not to kneel; nor did I, though a lady of my country, close to me, \* \* \* \*, dropped upon her knees, and would have persuaded me to do the like, but I would not. The halberdiers, who were close behind us, fell on their knees, and their halberts accidentally came so near me, that at first I thought they were about to use them to bring me to order, but was mistaken. They said nothing, nor did they make me any sign to kneel. Whilst standing I looked about me, and as far as I could see, all were on their knees. I turned myself towards the Pontiff, and caught his eye, but he did not look sour at me, and seemed only to notice the singularity of my standing up; nor was I reprimanded afterwards, either  
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from his Holiness or any of the Romans. Some of my own country-people, indeed, criticised my conduct with the assistance of the old adage, that "one should, when at Rome, do as they do at Rome." But as M—— applauded and highly approved my conduct (and he, it seems, never kneeled either), the opinions of others have not the least effect upon me.

I should have mentioned before, that the Pope made his entrance this day in a triumphant manner, being borne in a chair on twelve men's shoulders into the church, to a temporary altar placed in the great aisle; when the chair, being gently set down, he advanced a few steps to the altar, which was much adorned and ornamented, and thereat celebrated the mass. The Pontiff lastly appears at the great door of entrance, assisting at some trifling ceremonies relative to the blessing of relics and pilgrims, but these were not worth waiting for; so, to avoid the croud, we got into our carriage, and arrived safe at home, while the mob were still occupied in crouding the courts of St. Peter's.

Having at length concluded this circumstantial narrative of the Functions of the *Santa Settimana*, I ought to account for my having entered into so tedious a detail. My reasons were, to give you an idea of the impositions, rites, and ceremonies, of  
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the Roman Catholic religion, as practised at the fountain-head of all popery. Had I been writing to another, and not to you, I should have satisfied myself with saying, after the example of other travellers, "It is needless to mention the Functions during the holy week, as they are so universally known, and have been so often described already," &c. ; but I believe both you and myself, in our course of travel-reading, have not gained much more knowledge upon the subject, than the universal assertion of their having been already *so often described*. Therefore, doing by you as I should like you had done by me, instead of apologizing for the *length* and *darkness*, &c. of this letter, I expect your acknowledgments for the infinite pains and trouble I have taken to inform you of what you could not have a just idea of before, and to insist upon your believing my assurances, of being so tired with what I have wrote, that if this letter, by any accident, should not reach you, you shall ever remain in ignorance of the Functions for me. For you may depend upon not being favoured with its second edition. Adieu.

Your ever affectionate, &c.

LETTER

## L E T T E R XLII.

Rome, April 12, 1771.

THE arrival of your letters, replete with that warmth of friendship which disperses every gloomy thought, and completed with assurances of the blessing of health which you and \* \* \* \* \* enjoy, give me fresh spirits to continue the daily labours my curiosity incites in these regions of oddity and antiquity.

I will now give you a slight sketch of what we have seen, &c. since I wrote last; but first, cannot forbear mentioning an impediment extremely teasing to strangers. Having formed your plan for a morning's progress from church to church, from palace to palace, and so on, you set out in your carriage with impatience to commence your operations; when, after driving two or three miles, you are nipped in the bud of your expectation, by being told at the first palace you reach, that it is twelve o'clock, and therefore you cannot see it, *for all the world are dining*: you reply, you will call again in an hour; the rejoinder is, *every body will then be taking the Siesta\**: you stare about, and spy a shop in a corner; you order your coachman to drive to it:

\* A nap after dinner.

it: "*The beggar's shop is shut,*" for all the world are at dinner; and this answer is frequently accompanied by a parti-coloured smile of contempt and pity for *you*, who alone in the *creation* are *not* at dinner. However, notwithstanding such teasing delays, we have visited many a superb ruin, where are no diners nor dosers, the stupendous monuments of past ages, magnificent churches, and gorgeous palaces. Amongst the first, the following (that I have as yet seen) are my reigning favourites. In Campo Vaccino, which was the old Forum, are many fine remains of antiquity. The three superb columns, the only remnant of the temple of Jupiter *Stator*, attract the admiration of the traveller by the beauty of their proportions and sculpture; and much is to be regretted, that the greater part of them, at this day, lie smothered up in the soil of this foul cow-market.—The Temple of Vesta; where the famous Palladium was guarded by the chief vestal, who alone had the honour to look upon it.—The Arc of Septimius Severus, in white marble; one half of the great middle arch is buried in the ground, by which accident it loses the lightness its architecture bespeaks. — The ruins of the Temple of Concord; the vestibule remains entire; it is composed of six columns of oriental granite, of the  
Ionic

Ionic order ; they support an elegant pediment.—Of the Temple of Peace remain only three vaults, which is but a part of the portico of its vestibule; this temple was ranked among the most magnificent buildings of Rome when in her glory ; it was erected by Vespasian, after his conquest of India, and was the repository of the rich spoils he brought from Syria and the temple of Jerusalem, was decorated with statues and pictures by the most famous artists of that æra, and contained, besides, a large library. One of the columns belonging to this Temple was found by accident, and erected by Pope Paul the Fifth, 1614, in the piazza before the church of *St. Maria Maggiore*; it is one entire shaft, and measures 64 Roman palms in height.—Of the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina there remain only ten pillars, with a frieze and part of the Corinthian capitals; the proportions are fine, and the ornaments in a good taste: within side of those columns a modern church has been built, which disgraces as much as possible this venerable ruin.—Near this place, and in full view, is the Ruin of the Temple of Remus and Romulus, from whence was taken the plan of Rome, which now decorates a stair-case in the capitol, as I have already said in a former letter. The Ruin is a small rotunda, and serves as a vestibule

bule to a modern church.—The Arch of Titus terminates one side of *Campo Vaccino*; its bas reliefs, within side, are of fine workmanship; the drawing is correct; the horses are particularly well done.—Here are some remains of the Golden Palace of Nero; they consist of broken arches one above the other, but so imperfect as renders it impossible to form a judgment of its plan and distribution. There is still to be seen a little painting and gilding on the ornaments within side, but much defaced.

—In the centre of Campo Vaccino they shew a place where is said to have been formerly the Gulph into which Curtius leaped;—but I must restrain my pen, nor say more of the Ruins which are here all together, or I shall exceed the limits I prescribed to myself; therefore I quit Campo Vaccino, and proceed to the *Colisseo*, which I think is the most grand and stupendous Ruin in Rome. Twelve thousand Jewish captives were employed by Vespasian in the building, which they are asserted to have completed within the year. It has been stripped of all its magnificent pillars and ornaments, at various times and by various enemies. The Goths and other barbarians began its destruction, popes and cardinals have endeavoured to complete its ruin; the cardinal Farnese, lastly, robbed it of some fine remains; of its marble

marble cornices, friezes, &c. and, with infinite pain and labour, got away what was practicable of the outside casing of marble, which he employed in building the palace of Farnese. This amphitheatre is said to have been capable of containing eighty-seven thousand spectators seated, and twenty thousand standing; the proportions of this glorious Ruin, are so just, that it does not appear near so large as it really is. Its architecture is perfectly light, and it must ever be admired even by those who enjoy but a moderate share of taste for the fine arts, were they devoid of love or respect for antiquity. To others, who really delight in that refined study, it must fully gratify their great ideas, being a *definition* of the *sublime* in *architecture*. I think this sounds somewhat enthusiastic; but I don't fear exposing myself to you, who are as likely to give into enthusiasm upon this sort of subject as myself. There are still to be seen several of the dens for the beasts, which remain entire, and the conduits for the water, with a hollow in the stone for them to drink out of.—In the piazza of the amphitheatre are the remains of an antique fountain for the use of the people, which was called *Meta Sudante*. A little farther on is the Arch of Constantine. The architecture is of the Corinthian order, and executed in a grand and noble style.

stile. It is beautifully adorned with fluted pillars of *Giallo Antico*.— The *bas reliefs*, *medallions*, &c. are finely sculpted. — The Pantheon answered the idea I had formed of it; it is at present converted into a modern church, is generally called *La Rotunda* or *Santa Maria ad Martyres*, to whom it is dedicated. It is one of the most perfect remains of the magnificence of antient Rome, and the only Roman temple which is still entire. Its justness of proportion strikes the eye at first sight. The portico is an example that the noble simplicity may be still preserved, though decorated with the most ornamental order, the Corinthian. This portico presents to the view 16 pillars of oriental granite; eight of them support the pediment; they are very thick, measuring from five to six feet diameter, yet their look is light; they are said to be thirty-seven feet high, exclusive of their bases and capitals, which is probable; but we did not take their height; their shafts are each one entire piece. Having entered the portico, the great door merits attention for its noble and majestic appearance; the architrave consists of only three pieces of fine African marble; the door is of brass and of antique sculpture, but does not seem to have been originally designed for this place. On entering the temple,

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which is quite round, you are struck with its apparent smallness; but this deception must arise from its proportions, being as wide as it is high; it is covered by a dome open in the center; whose compartments must have made a beautiful appearance, when plated with gilt bronze, but at present there is not the smallest vestige remaining of any metal. M—— stepped the pavement, and it measured sixty yards diameter within, from wall to wall. There are no windows; a sufficiency of light being admitted from the opening in the dome. The pavement would have amused me for hours, being composed of morsels of fine Italian marble, opaque gems, alabasters, agates, and jaspers. These have been picked up indiscriminately from amongst the ruins, and used without the least regard to their quality, in repairing the pavement where wanted. Here are some fine pillars of porphyry and *giallo antico*; also altars, particularly the chief one, worthy of notice.

A Monument erected in honour of Raffaello, by Carlo Maratti, is not in a good taste. His busto appears in a nich, and near to it the following lines by cardinal Benbo;

*Ille hic est Raphael, timuit quo sospite vinci,  
Rerum magna parens, & moriente mori.*  
Here is also a monument to Annibal Car-  
racci,

racci, by Carlo Maratti; one to the famous Corelli; and others in honour of different artists. In general, the decorations are mean and base; bad pictures, votive representations, the weak efforts of superstition, every where cover the walls.

Behind the Pantheon appear ruined walls and part of a round building, which is all that remains of Agrippa's baths. What I propose to add farther in regard to the ruins of Rome I shall reserve for another letter, and proceed now to an account of the evening amusements. There are private assemblies at several houses; those of the Dutchess of *Brachiano*, of the Dutchess of *Mortelibretti*, of the Dutchess *D'Arce*, of the Princess *Altieri*, and of cardinal *Bernis*, of the *Casa Verospi*, and the *Casa Carpegna*, are the most brilliant. The business of these assemblies is cards, and you are continually presented with all sorts of refreshments. The opera is good; the theatre not indifferent, yet greatly inferior to that of Naples. What disgusts me much is, to see boys dressed in women's cloaths, as no female actresses are permitted. The scenes are agreeably painted, most of them representing architecture well done in perspective, and the point of view being taken from the angles, you have two views

at once. The Corso lies along the main streets; where the cattle being frequently killed at the doors of the butcher's shops during the time of airing, renders this amusement odious to me. The living oxen are witness to the murders of their innocent companions; their bellowing, and this barbarous custom shocked me so, that I am determined to avoid, in future, these scenes of butchery as much as possible. We have already some curious articles, which will be sent to England from Civita Vecchia \* \* \* \* \*

Adieu, &c.

P. S. I shall add an anecdote of the Pope, that came to my knowledge very lately.—He was sitting at his writing-table which was covered with papers, whilst two considerable persons of his court conversed together at a window near him; his Holiness had occasion to quit the room suddenly; these gentlemen were curious—seized the opportunity that offered to inspect some of the papers; when the Pope, a very short time after, entering, and perceiving instantly they had meddled with them: I know, that you know the contents of these papers;—make me no reply, for this instant I dismiss you my service;—depart from my pre-

presence;—but if ever I hear the least rumour of what these papers contain, before the time their contents are to be made public, your heads shall answer for it.

You see what firmness there is in the Pontiff; nobody doubts their keeping the secret.

## LETTER XLIII.

Rome, April 25, 1772

**T**HE weather is extremely warm; the English complain of the heat; but you know I love the sun, and the hotter he shines the more health and spirits are dealt me. However, this luminary is no friend to the complexion, and I have contrived to make a hat of pasteboard, and trimmed it with blond and pink ribbon, as was the fashion when we quitted England. I believe I shall find it extremely convenient in the mornings when we are walking amongst the Ruins; for constantly going out in the Roman fashion, with nothing to shade my face but a black lace hood hanging down over my eyes, has tanned me to such a degree, that I know not whether all the strawberry-water in Rome will be able to whiten me again. I find it more difficult here to

pursue my intention of being concise than I imagined I should ; there is so much to be seen—so much to be admired—whole labyrinths of curiosities ;—my difficulty is, which to choose ; it seems a kind of injustice to omit things so highly worthy of notice, and was I to mention them all I should send you folios instead of letters ; but be persuaded my determination is against folios. Amongst the Ruins of this once Imperial Mistress of the world, Caracalla's baths are in high estimation with all the lovers of antiquity. We were a whole morning wandering amongst these superb remains. They appeared to me to occupy as much ground as a moderate sized town ; and not only afforded conveniencies for three thousand persons to bathe at the same time, together with squares and courts for all kinds of sports and other public spectacles, but even science found a place here. There were porticos for philosophers to assemble in. The whole adorned with a profusion of statues, and the most precious ornaments luxury could invent. Now, alas, what remains ! nothing but broken walls and naked bricks ; yet even these last are fine in their way, as none can be formed at this day of so large a size : they are also of an extraordinary texture and colour. The pipes which conveyed the water to a prodigious

digious height into the upper apartments  
 are made of as fine clay as the old red  
 china, and are equally smooth. One part  
 of this immense building remains suffici-  
 ently entire to strike awe into the spectator;  
 it consists of a prodigious dome, which  
 has no support but from the wall whence  
 it springs, and, like an unfinished rain-  
 bow, seems suspended in air. Close to  
 these baths stood Caracalla's magnificent  
 palace; but of this there is not the least  
 vestige remaining. The Theatre of Mar-  
 cellus is so disfigured by time and abuse,  
 that it is impossible to make out the whole  
 of the plan; but what remains is of beau-  
 tiful architecture. Part of the entrances  
 may still be traced. There are also two  
 ranges of arches, one over the other; the  
 lower decorated with the Doric, the upper  
 with the Ionic order; both of them of  
 light and graceful proportions. The re-  
 maining friezes, cornices, and mouldings  
 appear plainly, by their sculpture, to have  
 been intended for a near view. This The-  
 atre seems to have had an oval figure; the  
 learned, however, differ in regard to its  
 form; for had it been oval, it had been an  
 amphitheatre, consequently destined to the  
 tormenting of wild beasts, and the inhu-  
 man sports of gladiators; but upon sup-  
 position of its being a theatre, could have  
 been only used for the representation of

dramatic performances. We cannot help regretting their having built wretched habitations for mechanics between the arches, and consequently filled them up, which disgrace these venerable remains extremely.

We have visited the famous Tarpeian Rock. The precipice is, at this day, no longer terrific; it is filled up with rubbish in such a manner, that though still sufficiently deep to break a limb of whoever should chuse to leap, yet I think they might possibly escape too without much damage. The way to it is incumbered with old buildings, and nothing can be more disgusting than the dirt of the inhabitants of this wretched part of Rome. Mr. Pope's description of those of *the Alley*, in Spenser's style, amongst his imitations of the English poets, will give you a just idea of the polite neighbourhood of the Tarpeian Rock. The Circus of Caracalla is still so entire, that the plan may be easily made out, and is more perfect than any now remaining at Rome. Here are apparent remains of the walls where the seats for the spectators were placed; that part of the Circus, at the greatest distance, terminates in a semicircle. The great gate which the victors passed through to their triumphs, is still to be seen. In the middle remains also a line of walling, the extremities of which were the bounds fixed for the chariots

riots to turn at. In one of the sidewalls you discern the places where large empty vases of *terra cota* were inserted, in order to augment the applauses of the people by a reverberation of the echoes from side to side. Considerable vestiges of three or four large brick towers still remain, which were probably those granted by the emperors to a few of their most considerable favourites, for the convenience of seeing the sports to advantage, and which were hereditary in their families. There is another square building, supposed to have been a kind of dressing-room for the competitors, and some remains of two most respectable temples erected to honour and virtue, by M. Marcellus. This great man constructed them in such a manner, that the Temple of Honour could not be entered without first *passing through* that of Virtue. On the other side of the Circus are the ruins of a Temple erected to the *Deo Ridiculo*, in the time of the second Punic war, when Hannibal, advancing from Cannæ with design to besiege Rome, retired suddenly on his own accord, before he had even commenced the siege.—Half a mile from hence, on the Appian way, is an antique Monument called *Capo di Bove*, the tomb of Cecilia Metella, wife of Crassus. It is a ruined tower, with a frieze and cornice, ornamented by ox-heads in *relievo*,

and garlands of cypress. The walls are exceedingly thick. In the pontificate of Paul the Third, an excavation was made in the tower, which brought them to a cavity that contained an urn made of Parian marble and fluted. It is now to be seen in the court of the Farnese palace. The inscription on the frieze of this Monument is, *Cæciliæ Q. Cretici F. Metell. Crassi.*

The Mausoleum of Augustus is situated behind *S. Carlo al Corso*. It consists of a great round tower. There are still remaining some columns and marbles, with which the outside was decorated. As the roof or covering is entirely destroyed, they have filled up the inside with earth, and made a pretty odd garden within the tower. A terras, formed by the thickness of the walls, surrounds all. There are *Souterrains*, or rooms where the ashes of the Augustan family were deposited.

The Pyramid of Caius Cestius is the only entire tomb remaining. It is near Porto S. Paolo. The outside is formed of large blocks of white marble. This monument has a fine effect when viewed at a proper distance; being, I suppose, about 40 feet in perpendicular height.

There are many vestiges of tombs to be seen in the environs of Rome, and is it not a custom that might be productive to happy consequences if practised at this day in  
Christian

Christian countries, were great and good men, who have served their country essentially, to be interred by the sides of the high roads leading to the capital, with proper inscriptions on their tombs (which might be also extremely ornamental), reminding their successors and others of the noble examples they had set them, and exciting in their minds a laudable ambition for the like honours? it would perpetuate the memories of our national benefactors, in my mind, more effectually than all the monuments that can be erected to them in Westminster Abbey—which few think of visiting after the tour made in their childhood—of the lions in the Tower, St. Paul's, the wax-work, and Westminster Abbey. I suppose there is no city in the world so provided with excellent water and beautiful Fountains as Rome. That of Termini, of Trevi, of the Piazza Navone, and many others, are worthy the attention of travellers. I dare not enter into the inspection of them, nor even venture to mention the obelisks and single columns which you find in every quarter of the town. The only Fountain you shall hear of at present is antique, that of the nymph *Egeria*, which is not in modern Rome, but at a little distance from the town, or to speak with the Romans, *Fuori di Roma*. Here it was that Numa is said

to

to have had his rendezvous with that nymph. Its present appearance is that of a pretty large roomy vault. There are few remains of its antique marble ornaments. A mutilated statue of the Nymph, and niches where the muses were placed, are still to be seen. It affords plenty of excellent water, of which you may be sure we drank; also several aquatic plants that spring spontaneously from these streams, and hang down over the entrance in many a fantastic garland. It is woody and gloomy all around, and, in my opinion, a most charming romantic spot, where one might indulge in contemplation.

Of forests and enchantments drear,  
Where more is meant than meets the ear.

Happily for you I have not visited all the churches at Rome. Indeed I have seen but a few of them; so do not be alarmed, for I shall mention yet fewer than I have seen. *S. Giovanni di Laterano* is a fine church, decorated with columns, &c. antique and modern, of the most precious marbles. Several statues of saints and apostles; the best, is that of St. Bartolomeo. Round the altar are four very curious antique pillars of bronze fluted, which were found where the famous temple of Jupiter Capitolinus stood. The relics conserved in the churches of Rome are too

too absurd to mention. This once only, by which you may judge of the others, I shall inform you, that they here boast the inheritance of a piece of Moses's rod and a morsel of Aaron's, a stick of the ark of the covenant, the table on which our Saviour eat the passover with his disciples, and the napkin which he made use of to wipe their feet.

The Church of *St. Maria Maggiore* is esteemed the most noble and grand of all those dedicated to the Virgin. It is built on the spot where stood a temple consecrated to Juno. The plan of this church was, we are told, miraculously traced out by a cloud which fell from heaven. The architecture is much admired; the inside of the church strikes the eye with a noble simplicity; the view of a great number of lofty pillars, of the Ionic order, of white marble, have a fine effect; the altar is formed by a beautiful antique urn of porphyry. The finest chapel belonging to this church is that of *Borghese*. Here is a profusion of rich marbles, *lapis lazuli*, the opaque precious stones, some paintings and frescos by Guido, and many very valuable ornaments. Amongst others, an image of the Virgin (attributed to St. Luke), surrounded with precious stones. I had determined not to tire you with more relics, but here I cannot help announcing to you  
the

the manger in which our Saviour was laid, the swaddling clothes he wore, and some straw on which he was placed.

*S. Paolo fuori di Roma alle tre fontane.*

This Church is built upon the spot where St. Paul was beheaded. The pillar to which he was bound, and where he suffered martyrdom, is near the first of the three fountains. These sprung up, as you will believe, miraculously from the three bounds his head made when struck off. The Church, however, is extremely well worth seeing; it is adorned on the inside with very curious antique columns\*, particularly two of black porphyry; there are no such to be seen any where else. Antiquarians are at a loss to determine whence they were brought, but the most probable conjecture is, that they were the productions of Ethiopia, where quarries of *Basalte* are common.

The Church of St. Urbano alla Caffarella was a temple of Bacchus, and graceful, indeed, are its remains. It is built of brick, with strength and solidity. The Mosaic in the arched roof, and between the double row of pillars is finely done. Here are representations of the vintage through all its progress: the wine press is particularly

\* Some of which measure twenty-two feet in circumference.

larly worth observing. The different figures of birds, large as life, are elegantly executed; and the pheasants superior to the others. The diameter of the ground-plan, between the inner row of pillars, measures about forty-five feet English, and ninety feet between the walls, or from one side to the other. The sarcophagus of Bacchus is of one entire morsel of porphyry, nine feet long, six broad, and four deep; the shell nine inches; the lid or cover twenty inches thick. It is sculpted in basso relievo, representing the Infant Bacchus, festoons of vine leaves, grapes, &c.

*S. Sebastiano alle Catacombe*, situated on the Appian way, was founded by Constantine the Great, in honour of this saint; who is represented lying in his tomb pierced with arrows. The sculpture by Giorgetti. The portico of this church is supported by six antique columns of a very rare species; two of them of white granite, and two of green, with uncommon spots in them.

The catacombs are the vastest; and the most noted in the neighbourhood of Rome. We explored them accompanied by a ragged ill-looking fellow, whose business is to sweep the church, and shew these silent mansions of the dead. One of our footmen was sent of a message, the other followed.

lowed us. We were provided with little wax candles, and descended the stair-case, each carrying a lighted *Bougie*; the others were for provision, lest any of those already lighted should burn out or extinguish. Having, at length, reached the bottom, after no very agreeable descent, we found ourselves in a labyrinth of very narrow passages, turning and winding incessantly; most of these are upon the slope, and, I believe, go down into the earth to a considerable depth. They are not wider than to admit one person at a time, but branch out various ways like the veins in the human body; they are also extremely damp, being practised in the earth, and caused our candles to burn blue. In the side-niches are deposited the bodies (as they say) of more than seventy-four thousand martyrs. These niches are mostly closed by an upright slab of marble, which bears an inscription descriptive of their contents. Several are also buried under these passages, whose graves are secured by iron grates. We followed our tattered guide for a considerable time through the passages; at last he stopt, and told M—— if he would go with him to a certain *Souterrain* just by, he would shew him a remarkable catacomb. At that moment I was staring about at the inscriptions, and took it for granted that M—— was really very near, but after  
some

some moments, I asked the footman who was standing at the entrance, if he saw his master ; he replied in the negative, nor did he hear any voice : this alarmed me ; I bid him go forward a little way, and that I would wait where I was, for I feared losing myself in this labyrinth in attempting to get out, not knowing which way they had turned. I waited a little time, and finding the servant did not return, called out as loud as I could, but, to my great disappointment, perceived that I scarce made any noise ; the sound of my voice, from the dampness of the air, or the lowness of the passages, remaining (as it were) with me. I trembled all over, and perceived that my *Bougie* was near its end ; I lighted another with some difficulty, from the shaking of my hands, and determined to go in search of M—— myself, at any hazard ; but figure to yourself the horror that seized me, when, upon attempting to move, I perceived myself forcibly held by my clothes from behind, and all the efforts I made to free myself proved ineffectual. My heart, I believe, ceased to beat for a moment, and it was as much as I could do to sustain myself from falling down upon the ground in a swoon. However, I summoned all my resolution to my aid, and ventured to look behind me, but saw nothing. I then again attempted to move, but found it impracticable.

ble. Just God, said I, perhaps M—— is assassinated, and the servant joined with the guide in the perpetration of the murder, and I am miraculously held fast by the dead, and shall never leave these graves. Notwithstanding such dreadful representations that my frightened imagination pictured to me, I made more violent efforts, and in struggling, at last discovered, that there was an iron grate, like a trap-door, a little open behind me, one of the pointed bars of which had pierced through my gown, and held me in the manner I have related. I soon extricated myself, and walking forward, luckily in the right path, found M—— who was quietly copying an inscription, the guide lighting him, and the servant returning towards me with the most unconcerned aspect imaginable. I had the discretion to conceal my fright as much as I was able, and only expressed, with some impatience, my desire of returning into the open air. M——, who is ever complaisant to my wishes, instantly complied; and as we were retiring, the poor guide, whom my imagination had represented as an assassin, told me, that there was a pit amongst the Catacombs, of which the bottom could never be discovered; and he had been told, that formerly a great many people had been abused, robbed, and flung into it. I thanked God, inwardly, that he had not told me this story earlier.—Having entered

entered the carriage, I determined within myself that this visit to the Catacombs should be my last. That you may not dwell longer upon the adventure, I shall return to Rome, and conclude my letter with a slight description of the Vatican.

The superb palace called the Vatican is attached to St. Peter's church, and was, for many years, the residence of the Pontiffs. But they have of late preferred *Monte Cavallo*, as a drier and healthier situation. The dimensions and elaborate descriptions of this palace have been given by several Italian and other authors. According to M. Venuti it contains eleven thousand and five hundred rooms; but according to *Bonanni* thirteen thousand, including the *Souterrains* and cellars. It is asserted by some, to have been built on the ruins of Nero's palace; others say, on the spot where that Emperor's gardens commenced. The principal objects that merit the attention of a traveller are, the library, the paintings of *Raffaello*, and the antique statues. After having passed through two great courts, you ascend a stair-case called *La Scala Regia*, designed by Bernini, which is really magnificent. You then enter a vast saloon called *Sala Regia*, painted in *fresco*, by various artists; the subjects mostly allegorical and historical. Many of them have been much injured by the painters.

painters who were employed, owing to their rivalry and private enmities to each other; blurring over and maliciously spoiling the labours of their brethren from motives of envy and revenge. You are then shewn the Chapel of Sixtus the Fourth. Michael Angelo painted the vaulted ceiling. The plan of this Chapel is an oblong square. Over the tapestry are twelve pictures representing different histories from the Old and New Testament, by Pietro Perugino. The heads of the figures are finely executed, but their drapery is quite absurd, being, for the most part, attired in gold and silver. Over the door, a picture representing St. Michael fighting with devils for the body of Moses, is executed, in what the Italians call, *Une Maniere Terrible*, by Matteo Dalecio. The famous picture, by Michael Angelo, of the last judgment, occupies the whole end of the Chapel. It is painted in fresco. The group in the middle represents Jesus Christ; on his right hand the elect; on his left, the condemned souls; at the top, two groups of angels, who bear the attributes of the passion. The saints, spectators of the last judgments, are ranged on each side of two groups which surround our Saviour. There are also choirs of angels who sound the trumpets, some conduct the blessed into heaven, and others thrust the damned into hell.

hell. At the bottom of the picture is Charon in his boat; and in the corner of hell stands a man with serpents twisting round him, being the portrait of a person to whom Michael had a particular aversion. This vast piece of painting is more surprising than pleasing; the confusion such crowds of figures produce—the variety and strength of design—the powers of imagination, and all the whims of fancy, are here united. The back ground, representing an azure sky, all of one tint, gives no *relief*; and, upon the whole, there is a poverty of colouring, joined to a great correctness in the drawing.

I shall here omit the chapel Paulina, having mentioned it already. In a grand apartment called that of Borgia are many fine morsels of painting by Raffaello, Giulio Romano, Pierino del Vaga, Pelegrino da Modena, and others. The celebrated *Salloni di Raffaello* consists of a long *suite* of rooms, painted in fresco by that great master. The first saloon contains all the virtues, charities, &c. under symbolical figures; the second, the twelve apostles, &c. the third, called that of Constantine, shews the miracle of his conversion; the ærian cross is borne by two angels. In another, the battle and victory of Constantine, gained over the tyrant Maxentius, at Ponte Mole. In this last

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is a remarkable figure of an old soldier who lifts his son, just expiring, from the ground ; the expression in the father is truly affecting. This saloon is completely covered with representations of different events in the history of Constantine. The next saloon presents histories from the book of the Maccabees ; here is a compliment to Pope Julius the Second, who would be introduced as borne into the temple where Onias the high priest is invoking heaven. His meaning was, that, after the example of Onias, he had delivered the ecclesiastical state from many usurpations and disorders which had affected the patrimony of St. Peter. Also a famous picture, and finely done indeed ; it is called the Mass, and represents a miracle which happened at Bolsenna : A priest, who doubted of the real presence in the Eucharist being at the moment of consecrating the wafer, blood dropped from it. The different effects of surprise and astonishment amongst the people is represented in the most lively and natural manner.

The subject of another piece which merits attention is Attila, who sees St. Peter and St. Paul coming in the clouds to give him battle. Here Pope Leo the Tenth appears also mounted on his mule, with the whole cavalcade of cardinals prancing  
on

on various nags. Raffaello has also introduced his master Pietro Perugino as mace-bearer, curvetting before his Holiness.

In the fifth saloon are some of his most esteemed paintings. The School of Athens is a picture remarkable for invention, grouping, just perspective, and colouring. It represents a place decorated with fine architecture. About the center appear Plato and Aristotle, who seem engaged in philosophical discussions, surrounded by their disciples. Socrates is represented speaking earnestly to a young and beautiful hero in armour, by which figure is meant Alcibiades. In another place, Pythagoras is graving musical concords upon a tablet, held by a youth clothed in white, who represents *Francesco Maria di Rovero Duca d'Urbino*, and nephew to Pope Julius the Second. At a distance is Diogenes, reclined on a step of the architecture; he has a book in his hand, and a small bowl near him. Raffaello has placed a relation of his own in another part of this picture, one Bramanti, who was a famous architect at that time; he is represented as Archimedes, tracing an hexagonal figure. Near him appears a young man, who puts one knee to the ground, and pointing to him expresses great respect and veneration; by this young man is meant Ferdinand the Second, Duke of Milan.

Milan. Zoroaster makes a capital figure; he is draped in cloth of gold, and holds a globe; by him stands Raffaello himself, with a black bonnet on his head and the most silly face imaginable under it; he has placed his master Perugino by him. The *coup-d'œil* of this picture is very striking, and it demands some time to examine it properly. Opposite the School of Athens is a large painting, the subject a dispute about the sacrament, so replete with symbolical, typical, and allegorical representations, that we did not contemplate it long.

Mount Parnassus is another esteemed picture. Raffaello has introduced here all the most celebrated poets of Italy, and placed himself between Virgil and Homer. Apollo plays on a violin; a great absurdity. The most capital figure is Sappho; her head, in particular, is finely done. Several other paintings merit observation, but you will excuse my passing them over.

The cieling of the sixth room is painted by Perugino. Its best picture represents the fire of *Bergo S. Spirito*, esteemed a *chef-d'œuvre*. The tumult, the consternation of the people, the effect of the wind upon the flames, and the different episodes introduced, render this piece extremely curious.—The seventh room is called that of the Consistory: the subjects of  
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of the paintings are, St. Leon pursuing the Saracens, and Charlemagne crowned emperor. The two last chambers exhibit some fine perspectives, by Baltazer Peruzzi. In the apartment of the Countess Matilda are elegant frescos by Romanelli. There are many other apartments, chapels, and galleries, finely decorated with paintings, by famous masters, which I shall pass over, and proceed directly to the Belvidere, or the *Torre di tutti gli Venti*. It has a communication with the Vatican by means of an open gallery or terras, and is called *Belvidere*, on account of the glorious prospect seen from it, which I fear would lose by any description I should attempt. The apartments of the Belvidere have been inhabited by several Popes, though but simply furnished. Here are some curious morsels of antique mosaic; one, in particular, represents an Egyptian dance.—A model of St. Peter's Church opens in the middle so as to shew the sections, and, by means of a void left in the center, you may shut yourself into it, and see all the ayles, chapels, &c. at one view. In order to go to the court of the Antique Statues, you must pass along the great corridor of the Belvidere, which is in length 1692 feet, or about the third of a mile. Half-way is an iron-gate which conducts you to the Vatican library. We

returned back to the library, after visiting the Antique Statues. At the end of this gallery is the famous Statue of the dying Cleopatra. She is represented in a supine posture, with a serpent twisted round her arm. I am sorry to be obliged to confess to you, that notwithstanding she is so much admired, we were not struck as with a perfect piece of sculpture. Very improperly, from the pedestal or base of this Statue proceeds a sheet of water, which falls into a basin on your left hand as you enter the above-mentioned Court. It is asserted to be the most superb assemblage of the finest Greek Statues in the whole world; there are eight in all. The Laocoon, the Apollo, the Antinous, and the famous *Torse*, are those I shall particularly mention; the other four being, in my opinion, unworthy of their situation here, though they might possibly appear to some advantage in another place. This Antinous is esteemed of more beautiful proportions than that in the Capitol. He is a model for grace; his limbs are elegant, and there is a lightness and ease in his whole figure, which is rarely found in the most beautiful nature; his attitude is more genteel than noble; he expresses more pensiveness than joy; yet we rather prefer the face of the Antinous of the Capitol to this of the Belvidere.—The Lao-  
coön

coon astonishes and terrifies; the subject is so horrible, and the expression so just, that I could not contemplate it for any time together, but returned to it frequently; my imagination almost caused me to fancy I heard the piercing shrieks of the sons\*, proceeding from the agonizing pain, expressed in their distorted yet beautiful features, and from the cruel folds of the serpents that confine and twist round their delicate limbs. The old man's distress is of another species, and equally horrible. I believe Michael Angelo may be justified when he pronounced the Laocoon *Il portento d'ell Arte*. This statue was found in the baths of Titus. I should have added also that the Antinous was taken from a place called *Adrianello*, near the church of *S. Martino di Monte*.

When the folding doors were thrown open of the nich which conceals the Statue of Apollo, I started back with surprise. Never did I see any sculpture come so near the life, nor animation express so much majesty and dignity. I was struck with awe. The beautiful proportions of the limbs, the grandeur and noble air diffused over the whole figure, his commanding aspect blended with angelic sweetness,

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\* These are in shut up niches to preserve them from being injured by the weather.

ness, joined to the most perfect features, made me almost fancy he breathed, and was about to speak: at length coming out of my first surprise, I said to myself, it is but marble that I see.—This Statue was found at *Nettuno*\*.

As to the famous Torse I cannot pretend to say that I am knowing enough to be sensible of its beauties. A headless trunk, without arms or legs, appeared to me a frightful object; but I make not the least doubt of its possessing all the beauties and perfections attributed to it by antiquaries and connoisseurs. The muscles are so strongly marked, that I should think it must have been a statue of Hercules; and what makes this conjecture very probable is, that it is placed or rests upon a lion's skin.

From hence we adjourned to the Library. I shall pass over the garden, which is very large, and laid out in the old-fashioned taste: it is remarkable for little else than a great number of concealed water-works, or rather *water-traps*, intended to sprinkle the unwary. Here are also more *considerable* fountains.

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\* *Nettuno* is a maritime town of the ecclesiastical state, situated near Capo d'Anzo, the ancient port of Antium, a town originally belonging to the *Volsci*, and where Coriolanus was killed.

This Library is so constructed as to afford a very agreeable *coup d'œil* at your entrance; but the books being inclosed in presses which are painted, deprives it entirely of the appearance of a library. The paintings are by various masters, and the subjects taken from sacred history, or the history of the early ages of the church of Rome. Some good antiques serve to adorn it; fine Etruscan vases, and among other curiosities, a remarkable column of oriental alabaster, white and transparent; it is solid and beautifully fluted. Opposite to this pillar is a tomb of white marble, and in it a winding sheet made of a linen which readily catches fire, but does not consume thereby. This linen is secured by iron-work, and in order to prove that it stands the fire, our *Ciceroni* pulled one end of it out through the iron, and set fire to it with a lighted *Bougie*. It burnt fast, and presently extinguished of its own accord. The corner which had endured the flame appeared rather cleaner and whiter than the rest of the sheet, which was all the effect the fire produced. I pulled it as hard as I could, with design to have torn and brought off a rag of it with me, but in vain; and I believe the *Ciceroni* suspected me, for he thrust it into its place, and so secured it from any further attempts. It is probably formed

of the *asbestus*, or, what is called in the Royal Cabinet of natural history at Paris, *Le lin Fossile*. Here is also a great collection of medals, which we had not time to examine. They told us the presses contained seventy thousand printed volumes and forty thousand manuscripts; several curious antique Bibles, in Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, &c.; a very pretty Greek manuscript of the Acts of the Apostles in gold letters, given by Pope Innocent the Eighth to Charlotte Queen of Cyprus; several manuscripts, with curious and high-finished miniatures. Amongst these is a Pliny, with the pictures of all the animals; a Virgil of the fifth century, all wrote in capital letters, with the figures of the Trojans and Latins, in their proper habits; a beautiful manuscript of Tasso, and a Dante, with miniatures at the top of each page descriptive of the subjects. The Original Letters of Harry the Eighth to Ann Boleyn, and a Treatise on the Seven Sacraments, composed by himself: he sent it as a present to Leo the Tenth, with these lines, written with his own hand:

*Anglorum Rex Henricus, Leo Decimo mittit,  
Hoc opus, & fidei testem & amicitiae.*

Here are many other curiosities of lesser note, which our time did not permit us to scrutinize.

The Arsenal is a long saloon, said to contain arms for eighteen thousand men.

Adieu.

Adieu. You shall hear from me again as soon as I have sufficient materials for as long a letter as the present. Believe me as ever, &c.

## LETTER XLIV.

Rome, May 1, 1771.

**I**T is impossible to feel *ennui* at Rome, though not a place of gaiety. This city is the most agreeable retreat in the world (if a capital can be so called) for all those who love the fine arts, and have a real pleasure in the study of antiquity; which yet rather inclines one to melancholy than cheerfulness. We propose, however, quitting it in a few days; but it will be with some regret, as we feel ourselves settled very much to our liking in every respect. Even the ceremonial of returning and receiving visits is not exacted here from us English, as it would be in our own country: one reason is, we are supposed to come here to *see*, and to inform ourselves; another, because whatever an Englishman does, *is right*. Such is the flattering idea the Italians, in general, entertain of our nation. This is a subject we must not enlarge upon, lest it should increase our vanity. The very recollection of all the civilities and friendly ideas our

Roman friends have impressed upon us; are difficult to combat; so predominant is self-love. Therefore I shall say no more on this head, but proceed to a description of what we have seen since I wrote last. The Palace Borgheze is a magnificent building, decorated with all the orders of architecture. The arcades of the court are supported by an hundred columns of granite. The whole ornamented with antique statues. Those of Julia, Faustina, and an Amazon, are amongst the best. The apartment of the *rez-de-chaussée* (lower-floor, over the under-ground apartments) consists of eleven noble rooms or saloons, all *en suite*, as full of fine paintings as their walls can bear. We were told this Palace contains seventeen hundred original pictures. Do not imagine I am about to give you a description of them all; I shall confine myself to a very few, as I have so many palaces to mention. A Picture, by Dominichino; the subject, the sports of Diana and her nymphs; the Goddess is represented giving the reward to one of them, who has had the good fortune to gain the prize. This beautiful scene passes at a river's side: the Nymphs are in various attitudes; one, in particular, the most admired, is undressing herself for the bath. Two fine portraits of Cardinal Borgia and Machiavel, by *Raffaello*. The three Graces blind-

blindfolding a Cupid, by *Tiziano*. In a gallery highly ornamented and covered with looking-glasses and gilding, the Paintings that conceal the joinings of the glasses are extremely pretty; they represent Cupids, little River-gods, &c. in many elegant attitudes: the works of *Ciroferi*. A fine Drawing, by Giulio Romano; the subject Adonis dead in the arms of the Graces; a weeping Cupid and an afflicted Venus; two swans offer to caress her; and in another part of the picture are Cupids mounted on the back of a wild boar, and piercing him with arrows. There are charming Fountains in the middle of many of the rooms, which play constantly, and fall into beautiful antique marble basons. In this Palace is a great curiosity amongst the collection of marbles; it consists of three antique slabs of white marble, found at *Monte Dragone* at *Frascati*; they are above three feet long, and about an inch thick, yet so pliable, you may bend them with little force; and when they lean against a wall, placed on their edge, they bend of themselves, so as to form a curve of above an inch.

The *Palazzo Corsini* is esteemed one of the finest in Rome; it was the residence of Christina Queen of Sweden, whilst in this capital. Her apartment is neither large nor magnificent, nor does it contain any

thing curious or remarkable. From respect to her memory, they have not changed or removed the Furniture, &c. which is now much faded and worn. Near her bed-side are some pictures, &c. of the sort often found as furniture to bed-chambers in Roman-catholic countries, *emblems of superstition*. The exterior architecture of the Palace is not much esteemed, but the interior plan is indeed very fine; the apartments noble and well contrived, as are the stair-cases which lead to them. Here is a vast collection of pictures. I shall mention the following, as they seemed to us to be amongst the best. But where one sees such numbers, and does not return to them again, I cannot with the same certainty, decide upon their merits, as though I had had an opportunity of considering them a second time.

A Saint Girolimo, by Guercino, in a great style. — A Butcher's-shop, by Tenieres; horribly natural, particularly *in a hot day*. — A fine Wovermans represents a sportsman on horseback, leading another horse; the subject is coarse; the moment the painter has taken is a vulgar German, or Dutch *joke*. — A fine Picture of a Field of Battle, by Bourignon. — A beautiful Piece, by Guido; the subject Herodias, with the head of St. John; the girl's head

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is extremely graceful, and the whole highly and elegantly finished.

A Prometheus; the vulture dragging out and feeding upon his bowels. All the horrors attendant on such a scene are represented to the life, by Salvator Rosa.— Amongst the Antique Statues with which this Palace abounds, there are two Busto of admirable workmanship, one a Vestal, the other Seneca; and a beautiful Statue of a Woman, finely draped. There is also here a very great Library, consisting of seven rooms contiguous to each other; the books contained in them are said to treat of seven different subjects; a subject to each room; and that all that can be said upon *each* by different authors, is collected here. They contain also some curious manuscripts, and a large collection of prints and drawings. The gardens belonging to this Palace are pretty, in an old style; a great deal of shade and regular arbours; also a Sylvan amphitheatre with a fountain in the middle, being frequently the place of meeting for the academy of *Quirini*, at which the cardinal *Neri Corsini* presides, and where many curious and interesting subjects are discussed, particularly such as relate to the antiquities of Rome. The public are allowed to walk in these gardens; a very great convenience, and

an instance, amongst others, of the Italian hospitality.

The *Palazzo Barberini* resembles two or three palaces joined together, and contiguous to it is a very large garden, ornamented with fountains, statues, &c. The ceiling of the grand saloon was painted by Pietro da Cortona, and is esteemed a *chef-d'œuvre*; its subject allegorical, and relates to the Barberini family. This Palace contains a prodigious collection of fine pictures, antiques, and other curiosities. As I have had frequent opportunities of examining its contents at my leisure, from the intimacy of our acquaintance with the family, I may be more accurate in my description, than in regard to some of the others that I have only seen by walking once through the apartments. I shall begin with the Pictures: A Sleeping Infant, by Guido; the colouring delicate and transparent, the drawing correct, the figure of the most amiable character, and sleeps as if *rocked by the Graces*.

A Portrait, by Raffaello, of his favourite Mistress, for whom he died. She is of a brown complexion, and if at all handsome, to my mind one of the most disagreeable beauties I ever saw. Her face is of a vulgar *contour*; a sharp chin, strong lines, with features lean and hard; her countenance stupid and insensible. She has  
a bracelet

a bracelet above her elbow in the antique fashion, on which is engraved Raffaello.

A Holy Family, by Parmesan. Hagar in the Defart, by Mola; finely coloured; the head of Hagar is beautiful. A very pleasing Picture, by *Pietro da Cortona*; its subject the reconciliation of Jacob and Laban. A Magdalen, by Guido, in high estimation with all the Virtuosi, which I must confess I do not like. She fails in character. The figure is, no doubt, beautiful, but it might be taken for any other person. Repentance, remorse, devotion, should be strongly expressed in a Magdalen, and, to my eyes, none of these are here to be found. There are several fine Portraits by Tiziano, and one of Raffaello by himself.

Amongst the Antiques are two famous Bustos of Marius and Sylla; a beautiful Head of Jupiter; a fine Head of Alexander the Great, and another of Antigonus. A Diana; her body of oriental agate. A small Statue of Diana of Ephesus. A Head of Julius Cæsar, of Egyptian pebble. A Scipio Africanus, of *giallo antico*. A Colossal Busto of Adrian; the head of bronze, the cuirasses and sash of marble, with curious red veins. An Antique Mosaic, very well done; its subject the rape of Europa. A beautiful Antique Lion, in white marble. A fine Statue, in a nich, of a young Man,

Man, who holds in one hand a kind of stick, and in the other a *patera*; this Statue is perfectly well proportioned, and of very antique sculpture. A Sleeping Faun, which is a Greek statue, and deserves to be held in the highest estimation for its admirable workmanship. Two triangular Altars, and one round; in *basso rilievo* appear Hygeia Goddess of Health, Isis holding the flower Lotus, and Mars. The *basso relievos* on the other altar are, Jupiter, Juno, and a young Man, who, with one hand, is leading along a ram for sacrifice, and in the other holds a cup. A Modern Statue, by Bernini, of a sick Satyr lying on his back: there is admirable expression of pain and suffering in this figure. A Statue, in *terra cotta*, of Pope Urbino the Eighth, made by a blind man, and said to be extremely like. It bears this inscription; *Giovanni Gambafo cieco fecit.*

Here is a fine Library, consisting of above six thousand volumes, beside a great collection of valuable manuscripts, medals, antique gems, cameos, intaglios, and bronzes. One of the most curious things in this Cabinet of Antiques, is an ancient inscription, which bears a treaty of peace between Rome and Tivoli. The apartment inhabited by the Dutchess of *Montelibretti* is nobly furnished in the Italian style. Some of the finest Pictures in the

the collection are its decorations ; but the rooms are not crowded with them, as is frequently the case in Italian palaces. Her bed-chamber is extremely pretty ; it is hung with a Lyons silk, brocaded with small flowers, and striped with silver, which has an exceeding good effect : the chairs, curtains, &c. are all covered with the same materials. The jewels of this family (as is the custom with all the great and princely families in Italy) are kept in a large cabinet, and form a kind of *regalia*. They are shewn to strangers, and an household officer has the care of them, who is answerable for his trust. Quantities of precious stones and pearl to amaze one ; the jewels the Dutchess wears are magnificent ; the diamonds of a much larger size than any I have seen in England, excepting those belonging to the crown, and a vast number of large pearl of the finest water and most exact formation. The apartment of the Princess Palestrine is furnished in a graver style than that of her daughter-in-law, and contains several curious cabinets, china, and small pictures in oil, some of which are very well done.

*Palazzo Farnese.* This magnificent edifice was, for the most part, built by Michael Angelo. The *Coliseum* and the theatre of Marcellus, were, by sacrilegious hands, stripped of their marble ornaments to adorn

adorn this Palace, as I have already mentioned in a former letter; and the memory of Pope Farnese, Paul the Third, is held in execration at Rome for this illiberal action. It is a noble pile, but not without faults in the architecture; many of the members, by their sculpture, ornaments, &c. have too solid and weighty an appearance; and the consequence of enriching the fronts has been the throwing a gloom over the apartments. The grand court is a square, decorated with the three orders; under the arcades which environ it are placed certain famous antique statues. The Hercules, called the Farnesian, (to distinguish it from the other Hercules) is esteemed a *chef-d'œuvre*, and was sculpted by one Glycon an Athenian, as the inscription upon it sets forth. It may be very beautiful, and the most perfect model of a man in the world; but I am insensible enough to its charms to own, that if all mankind were so proportioned, I should think them very disagreeable and odious. The muscles of this Hercules (allowing for the manner of speaking) are like craggy rocks compared with the Belvideran Apollo. Here is placed also, the large urn, wherein were deposited the ashes of Cecilia Mitella, taken out of her Mausoleum called Capo di Bove on the Appian way, as I told you before; but lest you should have forgot it, I mention

tion it to you again. The Flora is a fine Statue; her arms and feet have been replaced, and but indifferently; for the antique part has great merit; the drapery is gloriously done. Having ascended the great stair-case, the Statues of two Slaves make a striking appearance, and are worthy the attention of the curious. In the interior part of the Palace, are a numerous assemblage of Bustos, statues, &c. all antique. The vault of the great gallery is painted in fresco by Annibal Caracci, and is esteemed one of the noblest efforts of this master. The subjects are; in the centre, the Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne; the procession is comic, and old Silenus on his ass, makes a capital figure; at one end of this piece appears the God Pan, offering a fleece to Diana; at the other, the Judgment of Paris. The whole is admirably well done. Between the centre and the extremities, are the following: Triton on the Sea, with Galatea; the Rape of Cephalus, by Aurora; the episode here introduced of Morpheus asleep, has a very fine effect. Polypheme, endeavouring to charm Galatea with music, and then hurling a fragment of a rock at Acis, are finished with great spirit. Other compartments represent Jupiter inviting Juno to his nuptial bed. Juno, graced with the Cestus, entertaining Jupiter. Diana caressing Endimion;

mion; the love expressed here is worthy of so chaste a Goddess. Hercules and Iole; they have exchanged dresses, and he is trying to amuse her by playing on the *tambour de Basque*. Anchises taking off the Buskin of Venus. There are many more events of the fabulous history here represented, and which take up a great deal of time to examine, as they are all worthy of the closest notice. At the ends of the gallery are two fine Paintings in fresco; one represents Andromeda chained to the Rock; the other, Perseus converting into Stone, by the view of the Medusa's head, Phineus and his companions; but I think the picture we saw at Genoa on the same subject better done. This gallery is painted with various subjects, all taken from the heathen mythology, and decorated with curious antique bustos; many very fine are in a *Gabinetto*, particularly the famous representation of Hercules between Vice and Virtue (by Annibal Caracci), in which the figure of Vice is out of all comparison more charming than that of Virtue.

A great number, in every Room, of antique statues and bustos of the first class, and each merits a particular description. That of Caracalla is unquestionably the finest yet found. The description of the contents of this Palace, would easily furnish matter for a folio. The famous Group  
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of Dirce, the Bull, and the two Men, can never be sufficiently admired. This enormous composition is of one block of marble, as white and as fresh as if newly executed; it would take me half a quire of paper to enter into a detail of its merits: let it suffice, that it is one of the most stupendous efforts of sculpture that has as yet been discovered, and that I am sure we spent at least two hours in gazing upon it. It is kept under a shed in a court contiguous to the Palace.

A fine *Basso Relievo*, representing an *Orgie* of Bacchus broke into three pieces: A Second represents Trimalcion leaning upon a Fawn, whilst another odd creature pulls off his sandals; a troop of comedians follow him. There are several Antiques in this place that are extremely curious.

Near the *Palazzo Farnese* is that of *Spada*, an inferior palace at Rome, but which, however, is worth seeing. The most remarkable Antiques and Pictures are; of the former, a Pompey, about fourteen feet high, and finely proportioned. Paris, Venus, and a Gladiator. A beautiful Statue of a Greek Philosopher. A Ceres, finely draped. Eight very large Tables of Marble, wrought in *basso rilievo*. Amongst the Pictures, the Rape of Helen, by Guido. A repose in Egypt, by Caravaggio.

ravagio. The Sacred Fire supplied by the Vestals, a fine sketch, by Ciroferri. A large Portrait of Cardinal Spada. A View of the Market at Naples during the usurpation of the famous Massienello the *lazzarone*. In a small court is a pretty deception in perspective; it is a little gallery or arched vault, sustained by Doric pillars, which lessen according to the rules of perspective; the plan on which they are built drawing towards the point of view in which the reality would have appeared to the eye. The plan is only twelve feet in front, and contracts gradually, being but six feet at the end. It is built upon a slope, is eighteen feet high at the entrance, and but nine at the opposite extremity. A Statue of a Fluter is placed at the end of the little Court, which, when seen through this arch, appears to be full five feet high, but is, in reality no more than three. This little piece of architecture might be easily imitated, and would have a very pleasing effect in a London garden.

The *Palazzo Colonna* is a vast edifice, with a garden in proportion, and a prodigious collection of antiques and pictures. The grand apartment is nobly furnished. Amongst the Pictures I observed the following in particular: A St. Margaret and Dragon, by Guido; a beautiful sketch.

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A Cephalus, and Procris endeavouring to dissuade him from the dangers of the chase; this is by Titian, and extremely interesting. The Rape of Ganimede by the Eagle of Jupiter; by the same artist and very fine, though the colouring has suffered a little. The Gallery is superb, and of a prodigious length; it is furnished with fine paintings: A St. Francis, by Guido. A Flight into Egypt, by the same. St. John preaching in the Desert, by Salvator Rosa. A fine Picture, by Guercino; the subject David bearing Goliath's head; the daughters of Israel following, dancing and beating little kettle-drums; altogether ridiculous in the composition, though deservedly admired in other respects. A Man drinking out of a Glass, by Tiziano: what is curious in this Picture is the nose, lips, &c. of the Man foreshortened, as seen through the Glass. A most admirable grotesque Picture of a Peasant eating beans, by Tintoret. The Gardens are in a bad taste, having too many parterres formed of box edgings and coloured stucco, which are dignified by the name of English Flower Gardens.

The *Palazzo Bracciano*; rich in valuable antique marbles, and many good pictures. On the stair-case is a fine Bust of Antoninus Pius, and in the first saloon a rare Statue of Caligula. Amongst the Pictures  
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that decorate the apartment, is the Woman taken in Adultery, by Tiziano. The History of Cyrus, in five Pictures, by Rubens; and several originals, by great masters. The Dutches of *Bracciano* told me, that the best Pictures in the *Palais Royale* at Paris, and all those in particular, which are hung in the Lanthorn-room there, were part of the *Bracciano* collection. She is a near relation of the Duke of Orleans. I am not sure that I did not mention this circumstance in my first letters from Rome, where I had occasion to speak particularly of this noble Lady, who is much distinguished at Rome, for her high rank and great connexions.

The Cabinet of Curiosities belonging to this family contains a superb collection of medals. They belonged formerly to Christina Queen of Sweden. Amongst the Antique Gems is a Cameo in oriental agate, its size exceeds six inches by four; it represents the Profiles of Alexander the Great, and his mother Olympia.

*Palazzo Altieri.* This Palace stands alone upon a great deal of ground. The grand apartments are highly ornamented with paintings and gilt stucco, embellished in a very good taste. There are two Claude Lorrains in them, esteemed the best productions of that famous landscape painter. One is a View of the Sea; the

the other, to which the preference is generally given, represents a beautiful Landscape, in which is introduced the Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli. If I might venture to criticise this great artist, I should say that his landscapes would have been better, was there not an air of stiffness in all his objects;—his trees too trim and of too fine a green, failing in that contrast that withered branches and fantastic old roots and trunks of trees often produce in a representation after Nature. At the same time it is just to observe, that his paintings are highly finished, the glowing warmth of his skies are inimitable, and never to be found in the landscapes of any other painter.

Two Philosophers, by Salvator Rosa; and two Landscapes of fine Rocks and Water, by the same. A Virgin, by Corregio. A Lucretia, by Guido. A Roman Charity, by Guercino: this subject is curiously treated; the scene presents the outside of a dungeon; the Daughter looks through the grated window and calls to her Father, who is very conspicuous in the interior of the dungeon, but from his age and defect of hearing, he turns his head and looks behind him, in order to discover from whence the voice proceeds. His error produces great expression of anxiety.

anxiety in the countenance of the Daughter.

The *Palazzo Chigi* contains some good paintings, a curious collection of original sketches and drawings of the greatest masters, with some antiques. An Adoration of the Shepherds, by Carlo Maratti. Some fine Landscapes, by Claude Lorrain: one, in particular, which presents a beautiful View of the Sea: on the fore-ground the Rape of Europa. A pretty Landscape, by Salvator Rosa; in which he has introduced Mercury piping to Argus in order to make him sleep, and the beautiful Cow *Io* watching the event. A Satyr carrying a basket of Fruit; by his side a *Bacchante*: this Picture is finely coloured; it is by Rubens. An extravagant Picture, by Carravagio; the subject Mars whipping Cupid in the presence of Venus.

Here is also a very good Library, containing many curious manuscripts, enriched with fine miniatures. A Missal of Pope Boniface the Eighth, bound in silver, instead of leather.

The Chapel is pretty and richly ornamented.

*Palazzo Giustiniano* has not a very brilliant appearance. The interior wants new furnishing, but it contains a vast collection of Statues and Paintings, which are not protected and kept as they ought to

to be. There are several valuable Antique Statues in the Court. The Grand Apartment is decorated with antique columns of green porphyry and green marble, statues, fresco-paintings, and pictures. Amongst the latter is a very fine Flemish Picture, by the famous Handstorst of Utrecht, known in Italy, by the nick-name of *Gerardo della Notte*; for how can a soft Italian mouth pronounce such a hoarse rumbling word as that of *Hundstorst*? The subject of this Picture is Pilate on the Judgment Seat. The effect of the candle-light shews wonderfully. A Picture representing St. Peter, who the executioners are undressing, in order to prepare for his martyrdom on the cross: the colouring and the expression are great; it is by Saltarelli a Genoese.

A Portrait of a Widow to whom Cupid presents a looking-glass, by Paul Veronese. St. Anthony and St. Paul, a fine picture by Guido. Socrates in Prison, to whom they are about to present the poisoned bowl; and opposite to it, Seneca, with his veins opened and bleeding to death. Both these tragic scenes are represented at night; the lights of the flambeaux and lamps are finely thrown by the Utrecht painter I mentioned before.

In the Chamber of the Madonnas are various representations of the Blessed  
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Virgin, by Raffaello, Leonardo da Vinci, Perugino, Parmesan, and Andrea del Sarto.

The Gallery holds a crowd of Statues. The best amongst them, an antique Goat lying down. An antique Marble Vase, with beautiful rolled handles. A Minerva. A Vestal. A Fawn with his hand full of grapes. A Head of Homer. A Head of Vitellius. A Busto of Serapis. A Diana of Ephesus; and several Bustos of Emperors. Messalina sitting. The greater number of statues and other antique marbles deposited in this Palace were dug up, in sinking for its foundations, amongst the ruins of Nero's Baths.

*Palazzo Rospigliosi.* This Palace belonged formerly to the Borghese family. Here are several pictures highly worthy particular attention; but I must restrain myself in their description for want of time, and proceed to the antiques. In the Gallery is a remarkably large round Bason of *Verd antique*, supported by a pedestal of porphyry. An antique Piece of Fresco-painting, representing a landscape, with a house in the middle, and palm-trees about it, in the Chinese taste. Four small Fresco-paintings, antique, found in the Ruins of Constantine's Baths; the subjects chiefly Bacchanalian, but one, in particular, is extremely pretty; it represents

presents a Cupid on a Branch of Flowers, holding a ladder. In the Garden is a well-proportioned little building, which contains the best paintings in the collection. On the cieling of its saloon or vestibule is the famous painting in fresco, by Guido, known by the name of the *Aurora*, and represents the bringing on of the Day. Phoebus, in a triumphal chariot, is drawn by four fiery coursers, a-breast; the Hours, under the figures of beautiful nymphs, dance around him; he is preceded by a Cupid, holding a torch, and Aurora, who strews the earth beneath with flowers. The figures here represented may serve as models for grace; the folds of the draperies are light, natural, and simple; and the clouds finely rendered. It is much to be regretted that the saloon, the repository of this fine piece of fresco, is damp, by which it has suffered considerably, as well as by neglect. Here are also two fine Friezes painted in fresco, by Tempesta. I shall now have done with Palaces, lest you should be surfeited with them, as you were with Churches at Paris, and mean to conclude this voluminous letter with a description of the Jesuits College. You should here ask, How it was possible for me to have seen the Jesuits College? I shall inform you; for, to be sure, no female ever entered it, (at least,

by public permission) save the Empress Queen, Christina Queen of Sweden, and your most humble servant. Know then, that I, not devoid of that curiosity natural to us all, had learned that this same *Sanctum Sanctorum* of a Seminary for learning was possessed of a most rare collection of antique marbles, gems, pictures, natural history, and what not, and was consequently desirous of inspecting this pure and holy edifice, but found that females were never permitted to enter, save only the before-mentioned royal personages, who had as great a grace and favour, obtained permission, to that effect, from the sovereign pontiff; and that, in short, it was impossible for me to gain admittance, unless by an order from the Pope. I still persisted in wishing to see it, and frequently expressed my conjectures in regard to its contents in presence of a dignified ecclesiastic who was in his Holiness's good graces, and who being tired, I suppose, with constantly hearing the same subject harped upon, undertook to ask the favour. The Pope had the goodness to grant it, and an order was immediately given upon stamped paper, addressed in the form of a letter to the general of the Jesuits, with our names mentioned and those of \*\*\*\*\*, this gentleman and lady having much wished to accompany us, and we

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succeeded in procuring this additional gratification. The paper was signed in all form, first by his Holiness himself, then by *Monfignore Pallavicini*, secretary of state, the general of the Jesuits, and this paper empowered us to visit the College and every part of it at any hour, and as often as we pleased. We accordingly went thither, and were received by the general and the chiefs of that society with the utmost politeness. They were so obliging as to give themselves the trouble of conducting us about, and shewed us all the interior of the building, with its curiosities. It is a vast edifice; contains excellent apartments, well fitted up and most commodiously disposed. A Museum that would employ an antiquary many months to give a proper description of its rare antiques and other contents. Part of this superb collection is composed of the famous cabinet of Father Kircher, that of the *Marchese Gregorio Copponi*, and a collection of gems given by Augustus King of Poland. Here are beautiful antique vases of agate and cornelian, cups of egiadejasper and onyx, fine cameos and intaglios, antique ear-rings; the drops in various shapes; some represent little Cupids suspended, others vases, &c. Gold chains for the neck of exquisite neatness. A series of medals, and, amongst them, several

ral of gold, and extremely rare. Antique marbles, such as statues, *basso relievos*, altars. Instruments of sacrifice very antique and of beautiful workmanship. Inscriptions, &c. besides weights, measures, and several other articles in bronze. An antique Sun-dial, found at Tusculum, esteemed a very great curiosity : by this Dial it appears that the Romans reckoned twelve hours to the day, including one hour of twilight. A prodigious series of natural history, including the whole science, animal, fossil, mineral, vegetable, &c. nothing excepted. All the sciences are taught here, and there are professors appointed to instruct youth. Almost every necessary and useful article is made within their own walls. Here are buildings for the taylor, shoe-makers, carpenters, &c. who are solely employed for the College.

A very fine Library ; also some excellent pictures. Amongst these I particularly remarked the following. A beautiful one of the Woman of Samaria ; it is, I think, the best I ever saw on this subject ; she is charming, and her figure graceful in the highest degree. Our Saviour's figure is not quite equal to hers, but has great expression. The copper bucket which she has just drawn out of the well appears wet, and chilled with the coldness of the water. The whole of the picture

picture is as highly finished as possible, not the slightest circumstance omitted; even the cord fastened to the bucket is as natural as if really there. It is a small picture, the joint work of Livia Fontana and Dominichino, and cannot be too much admired. A St. Jerome, by Carravagio. A young Christ among the doctors. A Resurrection, by Vandyke. A holy Family, by Corregio. A Nativity, by Calvert, Dominichino's master. The Disciples at Emmaus, a fine picture, by Jacopo Bassano. St. Gregorio, by Guercino. All these are perfect, and in the highest conservation. There is a fine terras at the top of the building, from whence you have a beautiful view of all Rome and the country adjacent. Amongst the many conveniencies attached to this College, I had almost forgot to mention a botanic garden, with a laboratory, where all sorts of chymical utensils, the finest drugs (I suppose) in the world, and many curious preparations for different branches of physic. In the garden is a fountain that pleased me much by its simplicity. Suppose a moderately large arched nich in a wall, and rocks piled up within the nich, so as to form half a protuberant or convex pyramid. These rocks are overgrown with various mosses, over which the water gently streams, and falls into the bason below.

In the space between this small pyramid of rocks and the nich has grown a quantity of maiden hair, which hangs down to a great length, and makes a graceful appearance. We then adjourned to the Church of St. *Ignazio*, which belongs to the College. The riches of this edifice are immense. A profusion of the finest marbles adorn the inside. The chapels are beautiful, and the cleanliness and neat order in which it is kept most striking. Here are some good pictures, but that which most caught my eye was, the Portrait of St. *Ignazio*, done by a brother of the order. It is the representation of a beautiful young man, with an innocence and sweetness of countenance that charms you. It might very well pass for a representation of that glorious saint St. Stephen, at the moment of his martyrdom, when he saw heaven open to him. My partiality to the portrait of St. *Ignazio*, was extremely grateful to the holy fathers, who conceived an excellent opinion of my *taste* and *discernment*, and made me many compliments thereupon. At length we took leave, highly satisfied with the obliging deportment and hospitable reception we had met with. We were offered all kinds of excellent refreshments, and the professor of botany having observed me examining some drugs I saw in the laboratory, insisted

sisted upon my accepting some Venice treacle and some Arabian guins, the best I ever saw. I ventured to slip a sequin into an empty crucible which was near me, in hopes the lad who was at work might find it, but was perceived by one of the fathers, who returned it to me with some resentment. Nor would they suffer us to leave any perquisite for their servants.

I do not wonder this society is so numerous. The advantages they have over others are conspicuous. A Jesuit may indulge himself in every inclination. If he loves the *Belles Lettres*, he will find an ample society to improve and instruct him in that pursuit. If his disposition prompt him to a rigorous devotion and hard study, he may pursue it without interruption. Does his taste lead him to travelling? No people travel more. It is, no doubt, by the permission of the general of the order, or by his commands; but he is furnished with every convenience for the occasion. If he prefer laziness and idleness, the pleasures of the table and sensual delights, he will not find himself destitute of companions or opportunity. Has he his own notions of religious matters, or no religion at all? there are of the holy brotherhood, who would only wonder he was not worse, and bid him be thankful that a creature born prone to all evil and averse to all

good, should be capable of the slightest virtue, in any respect. But I must expatiate no longer on this artfully contrived religious society, or my letter would never finish. So adieu, &c.

P. S. I shall write once more before we quit Rome.

## LETTER XLV.

Rome, May 14, 1771.

THIS is the last letter you will receive from hence, as we propose leaving Rome to-morrow or next day, and pursuing our *route* to Loretto with all possible expedition.

As the weather is extremely hot, I think it will be more agreeable to you to make your ideal excursion to Frascati, Tivoli, and some of the villas, than to be detained by a view of the *Cloaca Massima*, in which we passed some time admiring its curious construction, being built of large blocks of stone, which unite so closely, that no cement or mortar was necessary. But, as I suspect you would chuse to breathe a purer air, I shall immediately conduct you, first to *Castel Gondolfo*, and then to *Albano*, where we lay one night. *Castel Gondolfo* is  
a small

a small town, or rather a village, built on the borders of a lake called *Lago Castello*, from a house or fort of castle where the Pope generally passes the autumnal season, called by the Italians *la Villagiatura*, answering to the season for the *Vandanges* in France, when all the great people are at their villas and country-houses. There is nothing remarkable in *Castel Gondolfo*; it is a plain, strong-looking, old-fashioned house. The road from hence to Albano lies along the borders of the lake, which renders it delightful. The prospect is very beautiful, the lake being fringed round with fine trees, and the grounds lying wildly scattered in a variety of shapes. The reflection produced by the different tints of greens, &c. with the sky, forms a fantastic appearance in the lake, which is about seven or eight miles in circumference, and seems a great round mirror, fixed in a prodigious concave frame. Near *Castel Gondolfo*, in the gardens of the *Villa Barbarini*, are the Ruins of a Country Palace of *Domitian*. The remains are considerable, though detached from each other. Here are to be seen vaulted chambers; a wall with niches in it, supposed to have been a gallery; an arched way, about fifteen yards wide, as many high, and above two hundred and fifty long, stuccoed in apartments, exactly resembling those

those of the interior part of the Arch of Septimius Severus. Some of the gilding on those compartments is still distinctly visible; therefore, it is probable this place was never intended for a reservoir of water, which the *Grande Virtuosi* here assert it to have been. On the border of the Lake D'Albano or Lago Castello, are two Grottos (which were discovered by the famous *Piranesi*); they are practised in the mountain on the side of the Lake; one is of a regular form, about the size of a moderately large church, in which are niches apparently designed for statues, and two or three small chambers detached. The other a cavern of about forty yards long, and fifteen wide; it has neither nich nor other ornament. These *Souterrains* are called the Grottos of the Nymphs, and probably were used as baths; for there are remains of seats to repose upon, and the centre of the grotto is hollowed out as though it had been a receptacle for water. The Canal which proceeds from the lake, is of great antiquity. It is a subterraneous aqueduct, made by the Romans three hundred and ninety-eight years before the Christian æra; when this lake having swelled to an amazing height, it was apprehended that, should it overflow, Rome might be in danger from the inundation; the Delphic oracle was hereupon consulted, and the Pythian

Pythian god replied, that the Romans should possess the town of Veia, which they were then besieging, when they should have found a vent to carry off the superabundant water of the lake, and not before. They were still farther encouraged in this undertaking by the prophecies of a soldier to the like effect. They began the work and completed it in one year, penetrating through the mountains, and forming an aqueduct of three miles long, near four feet wide, and between nine and ten in height. The work was finished with such solidity, that it has never wanted repairing since, and still serves the same purpose as it then did, carrying off the waste waters that rise above a certain level. A few years past, a man undertook to walk through this aqueduct. He entered, but was never more heard of. The water passes freely through it, and spreads itself over a plain on the other side of the mountain whence it comes out. Piranese, in his *Antichita d' Albano*, &c. has given a most curious account of this work, with very ingenious conjectures of the manner in which it was carried on, &c. In this famous mountain of Albano are frequently found marble pillars, cornices, &c. of beautiful sculpture. It is also curious to observe, that the soil bears the most evident marks of former volcanos and irruptions,

like

like those of mount Vesuvius, it being incorporated with burnt substances, such as black talc, a sort of cinders, and shining vitrified particles, like that mixed with the lava; also scoria, or dross of metallic substances. Just before we entered the town of Albano, we saw the ruins of a Mausoleum, which the people here call the Tomb of Ascanius, the son of Æneas. Near the other entrance of Albano is a great Mausoleum. This structure is of coarse and rude architecture. Five round broken pyramids spring from a large square base; it is here called the Monument of the Horatii and Curatii; but the learned antiquarians differ much in this point, some believing it to be the monument of Pompey the Great. To you I may venture to add my opinion, and own I should think it of earlier antiquity. One of our postillions inquiring the road to this Ruin, of a gardener upon the road, received for answer, that the *Antica Roba Inglese* he asked for, was about half a mile from the town. This idea of its being an English antiquity must have arisen from the numbers of English who inquire for and visit it. The town of Albano is a small inconsiderable place, yet contains some pretty clean-looking modern-built houses, where people lodge for the benefit of the air, when the heats of summer become inmodious.

modious at Rome. We lay at a little Albergo or inn, were pretty well lodged and served, and returned to Rome the next morning. Our excursions to Tivoli took us up the greater part of a day, though we set out between three and four in the morning, as we stopped frequently upon our road thither, and saw the cascades, &c. quite at our leisure. From Rome to Tivoli is fifteen miles. The road very good. We crossed the river Teverone, or the antique Anio, twice. It would consume too much of my time, should I particularise the antique bridges which still remain upon this river. At about fourteen miles from Rome, we came to the *Aqua Zolfà*. It is a kind of canal, about five or six feet wide, and as many deep. Its water of a deep blue colour, stinks horribly of sulphur and rotten eggs, and is of so penetrating a quality as to have undermined a great part of the plain through which it runs. This Canal was cut by a cardinal of Este, and takes its source from the *Solfatara*, a small lake about a mile out of the road, of a very muddy yellowish cast, and stinks as much as the canal. This is covered with little floating islands, or rather large tufts of grass and rushes growing in a soil from one to about three feet thick. Some are as large as a moderate-sized ferry-boat, others not larger than a card-table.

ble. You may pull those latter towards the shore, and the children of some of the poor people who live near the lake jump on them, and sail about by the help of a stick, with which they paddle. Several kinds of weeds grow on these islands, and flourish along with the grass, which is remarkably green, though the water of the lake is so impregnated with sulphur, that one would think no plant could vegetate in its vapour. On throwing pebbles in, the water boils up and bubbles strongly for some time after, nor do they sink as soon as in common water. The poor people who live near this lake told us it was unfathomable towards the middle; but we had no time to make the experiment ourselves, nor were we properly provided for the purpose. This water forms incrustations, which at length become stone, and retain a strong sulphureous smell. All about this country are remains of antique country-houses. Among others, that of *Regulus*, which had magnificent porticos (as mentioned by Pliny). Near the *Ponte Lucano* are the remains of the Tomb of the family of *Plautius*, which had some little resemblance to that of *Capo di Bove*. At present it makes no other appearance than that of a round tower. Near it are the shafts of six columns. Two inscriptions  
still

still remain on slabs of marble, one of which is very legible ; it runs thus :

*M. Plautius m. f. an. Silvanus cos. VII. vir. Epulon. huic Senatus triumphalia ornamenta decrevit ob res in Illyrico bene gestas. Lartia gn. f. uxor A. Plautius M. F. Virgulanus. vixit an. IX.*

Having passed Ponte Lucano, we turned off to the right, in order to visit the Ruins of Adrian's Villa, which is two miles from that bridge, and the same distance from Tivoli. These Remains cover a large piece of ground. Several country-houses have been built upon them, and the greater number of the finest antiques in the Roman collections have been here. Various authors agree, that this Villa was in length three miles, and in breadth a fifth of that space. Two theatres, of semi-circular plans, terminate these Ruins. An exterior portico belonging to one of them, with chambers for the actors, still remain ; with six stair-cases, to ascend to different parts of the theatre. One of the side-entrances to the proscenium and the orchestra are yet discernible.

Ranging along a terras are a great number of rooms, which let into each other. They are all vaulted, and of strong architecture. These are called the *Cento Camerelli*,

*relli*, and are said to have been the lodging-rooms of the Prætorian guards. Also edifices for baths (some supplied by the *Anio*, others by the *Aqua Marcia*), and a variety of buildings, with various-sized apartments, some very small, others large and well proportioned; in many of which are still discernible the ornaments of the cielings in stucco, and painted in arabesque. Amongst many other ruined structures, one is very remarkable: it is called *Canopus*, and forms a great basin, supposed to have been used for *Naumachias*. The front of this edifice is fallen, and a temple belonging to it (that is, in any degree, perfect) only remains. It was dedicated to Neptune, who was worshipped by the Egyptians under the name of *Canopus*. There have been several fine antique statues found in this place. A Sea Horse, consecrated to *Canopus*. An *Isis*, *Osiris*, *Ibis*, with hieroglyphic inscriptions. Here are also the remains of a beautiful grotto, consisting of several apartments, ornamented with niches for cascades of water, with contrivances to let in the light to great advantage. The cielings of these grottos are painted in compartments of various colours. On part of these gardens is built a religious house for the Jesuits; they are said to have been laid out formerly in the most beautiful representation of the

the

the Elysian fields, contrasted with the regions of Pluto; even the rivers *Lethe*, *Cocytus*, and *Flegeton* were introduced, and the most exquisite efforts of art contributed to heighten the delusion. Here still remain vestiges of colonades, temples, aqueducts, &c.; and in another part are porticos, supported with marble columns of great beauty. Much more may be said of this Villa, even in its present ruined state; but what it has been, is still to be gathered from a variety of ancient authors. Suffice it to say, that the utmost efforts of the arts and sciences were exhausted in its improvement, with all the *refinements* luxury could invent, *riches* and *despotic power* bestowed, upon a spot kind and beautiful by Nature. A wet and marshy piece of ground, which was partly under water, and had been an immense basin in the front of this Villa, is rented by a Mr. Hamilton, a very ingenious English artist, who keeps a great number of men at work upon it, and has succeeded so far as he has gone, in draining it, with great expence and labour. He very sensibly fixed on this, concluding that many valuable antiques might have been thrown into the water, to preserve them from the barbarous fury of those that demolished this superb edifice. He has already found a great number of curious articles, which  
will,

will, I believe, by their sale, yield him an ample indemnification. The work is continued with vigour, and I do not doubt but that in time you will see in England very fine morsels of antique sculpture, rescued from oblivion by this industrious artist.

In continuing our route to Tivoli, we pass by the spot where once stood the Villa of Cassius, and where the conspirators met. Tivoli is situated on a hill; the town itself is a wretched place, and made more disagreeable by a number of forges: it was founded fifteen hundred years before the Christian æra; was famous for its oracle, as mentioned in Virgil, and for the salubrity of its air. Horace, Cicero, and many other classic authors have celebrated it highly. The former had, unquestionably, a house there, or in its neighbourhood: at present it is an episcopal town. The cathedral is built upon the Ruins of the Temple of Hercules; but the most remarkable antiquity here is the Temple of the Sybil: the beautiful architecture and fine proportions of this small edifice strike you at the first view: its form is most elegant, its sculpture perfect and peculiarly graceful. The lines so insisted upon by Hogarth in his Analysis of Beauty, are to be traced in all the ornaments of this building. Its situation is now on the side  
of

of a hill; on one side appears the town, and in front the great cascade. This Temple has been so accurately described with the plan, measurements, &c. by various architects, and particularly by Palladio, Vitruvius, and others, that I am surprised it has not been copied in some of the fine gardens of England, where there might easily be found situations proper for such an ornamental building. The English unquestionably surpass all the nations of the world in their gardens. That free people take the beauties of Nature *captive*; they then present Art to her acquaintance, who flatters, adorns, and dresses her, till, forgetting she is imprisoned within the limits of concealed walls or invisible *ha-ha's*, she willingly consents to display her native charms in all her lustre, and submits to the rules Art has enjoined her, in pursuit of *elegance, utility, convenience, and liberal neatness*. But I must not let the gardens of England consume my time; Italian only shall at present engross my thoughts, as I am soon to conduct you to the Villas near Rome. At present we are at the great Cascade at Tivoli; it is formed by the Teverone or antique *Anio*. This river following its natural course till it comes near and above Tivoli, is there confined within a narrow valley between two mountains, and precipitates itself down a high and pointed

pointed rock, which opposes its passage, into another steep valley. The dashing of this torrent is re-echoed back from the inmost recesses of the shades of Tivoli, and the spray of the water so fills the air, as to produce a very broad and beautiful rainbow, composed of a greater variety and of more glowing tints than that of the Heavens. The *Cascatella*, which I think a much finer cataract, is a little way out of the town. This is composed of one great sheet and three lesser falls, which at length all unite. In their descent they tumble down amongst rocks, and, by the force of their fall and the resistance they meet, are thrown up with such violence as to form new cascades. Amongst the rocks grow trees in the most fantastic shapes. The spray causes rainbows as in the great cascade, and the whole landscape forms the most romantic and picturesque view imaginable. The rude brawlings of the water, dashing from rock to rock, is finely contrasted by the stillness that reigns in the adjacent pastures, covered with sheep, feeding and reposing in the utmost tranquillity.

Here are remains of the house of Mæcenas, at least they are shewn for such. They chiefly consist of ruined arcades and detached morsels, but it is very doubtful whether these are not rather ruins of baths, that

that might possibly have belonged to Mæcena's villa. Returning to Tivoli by a steep hill (another way) we had a fine view; the dome of St. Peter's is quite visible; the country which forms the nearer prospect presents the most agreeable variety of ground: Tivoli loses its defects by the distance, though it is but short, and forms a most beautiful amphitheatre; the Temple of the Sybil appears much larger, and seems to overlook the whole view; the sky behind it is extremely advantageous, and there is something so lively and agreeable in the disposition and assemblage of all the objects, as must enliven the dullest imagination. The Cascades of Tivoli have a particular effect on the morsels of broken rock on which they fall, grinding, and as it were, polishing them in such a manner as to give them exactly the appearance of the finest and whitest sugar-plumbs of various shapes, but particularly those of almonds and barberries, and are so correctly fashioned, that they would deceive the nicest eye. These little stones are to be had of the cottagers whose habitations are near the cascades, and who dispose of them to travellers as a natural curiosity.

The Villa Estense is built on one of the heights of Tivoli; it was a very fine thing in its day. The cardinal d'Este, son of Alphonso Duke of Ferrara, and Lucretia Borgia,

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Borgia, built it in the year 1544. The ground is laid out in hanging gardens and terrasses, fountains, basons, parterres, labyrinths, &c. ; it is decorated with statues, and appears altogether pretty enough in a very old-fashioned way. At the top of a cascade is a grotto ; it formerly contained a water-organ, which is at present out of repair. There are some pretty water-works in the garden ; one set, in particular, which play from the beaks of eagles, and are placed so as to form the coats of arms of the house of Este. I believe I forgot to mention, that in the road to Tivoli a considerable part of the plain is covered with incrustations, produced by the quality of the water or river ; they are, when newly formed, extremely brittle, but, after some time, grow hard ; they take the forms of herbs and blades of grass, or whatever other substance the inundations of the river have flowed over, and would be extremely ornamental in grotto-work.

Having, I think, been sufficiently particular in regard to Tivoli and its environs, I shall now proceed to the villas near Rome. That of cardinal Albani is the most esteemed : it is rather a small palace than a villa, but the Italians give this modest name to all the fine buildings in the environs of their capital cities. The portico

tico of this elegant edifice is supported by columns of Egyptian granite, and ornamented with antique statues of the emperors, and some very curious *basso relievos*, which serve them for pedestals. Amongst the statues of the emperors, the most remarkable is that of Domitian, being the only one of him that has as yet been found quite entire. Here are two beautiful vases of *alabastro fiorito*; they measure above seven feet in diameter. Through the vestibule, which is also filled with antique marbles, you enter the chapel, where is a profusion of precious marbles and ornaments of gold. The altar is a sarcophagus of red granite, which contains the body of a saint and martyr. The wings or side-colonades are formed by pillars of granite, between which are placed, on one side, the bustos of the most celebrated conquerors in antiquity, and on the other side the most famous philosophers, orators, and poets. Amongst many other very curious antiques, an Etruscan altar, in particular, here claims our attention: it is square, and is sculpted in *basso relievo* on three of its sides; these represent Mercury conducting a nymph, preceded by Bacchus; the second side Ceres, Neptune, and Juno: on the third appears a Divinity, holding a bird on the top of a staff, and two Nymphs, who follow each other,

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bearing staffs; the hinder holds her that precedes by part of her drapery. These figures are correct in their design, and perfectly graceful.

Here are also two beautiful Urns of a very large size, of yellow transparent antique *Alabastro*: they were found in a vineyard belonging to the *Marchese Paliotti*, who presented them to his eminence the present Cardinal *Albani*. The *Sala*, or principal *Stanza* above stairs, contains two beautiful columns of *Giallo Antico*. In the gallery is a fine collection of rare antiques, columns, mosaicks, *basso relievos*, &c. Two statues are particularly admired; one a Pallas, the other an Ino with the infant Bacchus in her arms. Here is a very fine portrait of *Antinous* in *basso rilievo*, esteemed by the *Virtuosi* at Rome, a most rare and curious morsel.—All the apartments are elegantly decorated with antique bronzes, vases, fine pieces of mosaic formed of real marbles, and opaque gems instead of composition: very large looking glasses, gilding, old japan, &c. The cielings are painted; one in particular represents Apollo and the Muses: these personages are all of them portraits. \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* What charmed me much in this villa, is the elegant order in which all is kept, joined to the most exquisite and universal cleanliness. The gardens

dens are large for Italy, and laid out in the old taste of parterres, terrasses, and formal walks. Some very curious antique statues, fountains, and basons, contribute not a little to their decorations. The Egyptian statues are more curious than beautiful: one is of Theban alabaster, the others basalte. In the middle of a large parterre you see an antique fountain and bason of granite, supported by four old crouching fawns, of good workmanship, in the Etruscan style. Here are arcades and arbours formed of trees planted regularly, and a building called the temple of Jupiter; consisting of a vaulted room supported by two large columns, one of which is of an entire piece of *alabaastro fiorito*.

The villa Aldrobrandini is near that of Albani: this is worth seeing only on account of certain antique fragments, and a famous painting in *fresco*, found in the baths of Titus, which represents a wedding; some of the female attendants are graceful; the bridegroom seems not very far from his *grand climacterick*, the bride is young and looks *sorrowful*. Altogether, the personages represented might well pass for assistants at a funeral feast, so little appearance is there of mirth or gaiety. The colours have suffered much by the under-ground damps, and the tints are universally inclined to a brick colour cast.

The villa Pamfili, or *Belrespiro*, a country palace belonging to prince Doria, stands in a park and gardens about six miles round: these gardens are supposed to occupy the same spot with those of the emperor Galba, on the Aurelian way. The architecture of this villa has been much criticised; however, its appearance at first sight pleases the eye. A kind of square tower rising from the middle of the building, agreeably breaks the too great length and formality occasioned by the linear uniformity of the elevation. Here are some good antique marbles, and some pictures worthy of notice.—In one of the rooms is a fine antique statue of a Vestal; there is great dignity and expression in her face and figure; the drapery is elegant, and the plaits easy and natural. In another room is a Claudius in woman's clothes; his expression of countenance is admirable. In one of the lower rooms are the portraits of two remarkable persons, Pamfilio Pamfili, brother to Pope Innocent the Tenth, and his wife Olympia Maidalchini, who is said to have had the power of a queen in Rome, during the pontificate of her brother-in-law, with whom she was believed to have been too intimate: this pontiff flourished about the middle of the last century. Above stairs, is a Venus and sleeping Cupid painted on wood; by *Tiziano*;  
a Cupid

a Cupid and Pysche, by Guido.—In the tower before mentioned at the top of the house, is a round room, which contains several curious articles, pretty morsels of sculpture in coral and amber, gold and crystal dishes curiously wrought; a whole service in gold set with turquoises, and one beautiful fruit dish of the same metal pierced and richly ornamented with turquoises; also a great number of cups, saucers, bowls, vases, cruets, and ewers, of serpentine stone.—Antique vases, and a few Etruscan.—A great collection of very fine old china, and various articles of natural history. In other apartments are some fine verd antique columns, with a statue of an hermaphrodite much admired by the virtuosi: groups of children by Alguardi extremely well sculpted.

The garden is laid out in very bad taste; the parterres contain no flowers, nor were they intended for that purpose: they describe a formal and very ugly pattern, filled up with coloured plaster, and edged with ragged box *struggling in vain* to grow. The walks are straight, fenced in on each side by ever-green hedges clipped to the quick; also a labyrinth not very unlike in appearance to some of Euclid's problems: lines intersecting each other, and forming various sharp angles. Here are also terrasses surmounted with balustrades, a semicircular

court ornamented with fret-work, and some indifferent statues and bustos. However, in the middle of this court is a recess, and a very fine water-organ concealed behind the statue of a fawn, &c. This recess is an agreeable retreat from the heat of the sun, for when the organ plays, a very fine breeze proceeds from it: the water alone occasions the wind, and at the same time turns a wheel shaped like a cylinder. In short, I can explain this no better to you than by saying, there is a *wheel within a wheel*. To one of these belong keys or hammers, which the water causes to rise and fall; the effect of this piece of machinery is really delightful; the organ plays several good airs in exceeding good time; birds sing as if in great numbers, accompanied by falls of water: at the end of each strain, the birds repeat the two or three closing bars, which are finely returned to you again by an echo, and the sound of distant falls of water gradually dying away, concludes the music.—They told us the machine was not subject to be out of order, nor could I discover that the expence attended the making such an organ, exceeded one hundred pounds sterling.

The Park contains a few deer; but do not imagine it laid out and planted like an English park.

The

The villa Barberini is built in the same place where Nero had a house, from whence he could see the sports in the *Circus Caius*; and where he repaired to glut himself with the spectacle of the cruel deaths he gave the Christian martyrs in that place. This villa is extremely habitable and agreeable; the gardens, tho' not as well laid out as they might be, are nevertheless in a good old-fashioned style: the trees are fine and not much tortured; the walks well kept, and there is a great abundance of flowers. —In the garden is a house, here called an English Coffee-house, to which however it bears not the most distant resemblance. It is an elegant, well built compact house, on one of the prettiest plans I ever saw; such a one would be esteemed a beautiful villa near London. The curious contrivance of the stair-case is worthy the attention of good architects, and I am sorry we did not procure the plan and exact dimensions of this English Coffee-house. There are exceeding good rooms in it, the proportions of which have hit most luckily. In the gardens are some very pretty perspective views well painted which terminate the walks, and produce an exceeding good effect: also several fountains with very fine basons of earthen-ware, painted by Raffaello; large vases of alabaster, and some vestiges of antique baths. To this

villa the duke and dutchefs of *Montebretti* often repair and pass their evenings: there is a very good billiard-room, where they and a small party of their friends amuse themselves part of the evening, in walking in the gardens. In the English Coffee-house they are served with all sorts of refreshments. *La Farnesina*, a beautiful country palace, situated on the banks of the Tiber, is a large edifice composed of three parts; that which forms the centre is the most considerable, the others consist of two pavillions: the front of the central building is ornamented with the two orders Doric and Ionic well executed. An arcade below conducts to a *Sala*, decorated by the paintings of Raffaello and his pupils: they represent the council of the gods; the marriage of Cupid and Psyche; groups of figures occupy large angles between the windows, and various ornaments of festoons of fruits, flowers, Cupids, &c. with curtains drawn up in large folds well expressed; all these are painted on the wall, and are extremely fine, though they have suffered much by the air at the time the arcades were open; which are now glazed, though too late. They have also received much injury from being retouched by Carlo Maratti, who heightened some of the back grounds with a kind of blue colouring, which has taken from the figures their proper

per keeping. The wiles and pranks of a great number of little Cupids are here delineated, in a very ingenious allegorical series, with various representations of the loves of Cupid and Psyche; that division which represents him shewing her to the Graces for their approbation, is extremely pretty: the gods and goddesses are finely done, their attitudes noble and characteristic; and the wedding banquet particularly well ordered and grouped. I must not venture into a detail of the various representations on the ceilings and walls of the other apartments decorated by this great master, though they have all very great merit.—Here are also some antique statues extremely fine. Amongst the best is the celebrated Venus, called by the Italians *Venere Callipighe*; the head and hands are modern. Two crouching Venuses. A Colossal Head of Cæsar, and some other antiques that are very good. The *Villa Mattei*, formerly a fine house with gardens, is now much neglected and out of repair: it is situated upon *Monte Celio*; and here you find some very curious remains of antiquity. A long grass walk in the garden pleased me much, on account of several antique *cenotaphs* (small tombs containing the ashes of the dead) ranged along the sides. What a fine evening's walk would not this have been for our famous Doctor

Young! What a scene for his contemplations, what moral reflections would not have risen to him out of these tombs?

Opposite to one of the fronts of the house, upon a piece of turf surrounded with trees; a monument is placed, which, though not very good in itself, produces a fine effect from its point of view. In these gardens is a Colossal Head of Augustus, so wonderfully executed, as to have the appearance of that of a *giant's petrified*; you will make allowance for the extravagance of this idea of mine. Here are some pretty grottos, fountains, antique inscriptions, &c. and the garden, upon the whole, must be better at present than when it was kept, the trees having grown out of the tortured shapes into which they were forced by the merciless shears of the Roman gardeners. The plan of these gardens is not bad, and should an Englishman take a fancy to purchase the villa (which is now to be sold), he might, at a very easy expence, give a model to the Romans for their imitation in gardening. I say any of our countrymen, for I flatter myself, that I do not know one void of, and many who possess, a very great share of taste; and I presume, as well of those with whom I have no acquaintance. Amongst the antique statues in the villa, are the following which are very good, and deserve to be particularly noticed: an  
Amazon

Amazon shooting with a bow and arrow; her drapery appears to be of fine lawn, through which her limbs and muscles, though very delicate, are extremely conspicuous. A horse fleeced in bronze, the anatomy very fine. An Altar, small but elegantly decorated with festoons of flowers fastened to the ears of fawns. A small basso relievo of Etruscan sculpture; it represents two Women and a Dog, one seems employed in teaching the animal to dance, she holds him by one of his fore-feet. A beautiful table of green porphyry; this kind of marble is very rare, and greatly esteemed at Rome. A little statue of Ceres, of the most delicate sculpture in every respect, and highly finished. A Faustina draped after the statue of Modesty; her drapery is very fine. A Diana of Greek sculpture: a Satyr lying down, whilst a Fawn extracts a thorn out of his foot; the expression is very good in both these queer creatures, and the effect of the charitable assistance seems to be nearly completed.

The Villa Borgheze, or Pinciana, is famous among the villas near Rome. Here is an assemblage of Antiques, that merit much attention: many fine *basso relievos* are inserted in the walls on the outside of the building, which is highly decorated; it would consume much of my time and patience, to enter into a particular detail of the

the

the various statues, bustoes, &c. all of which present themselves before you enter the palace; so I shall pass over these, and be as concise as possible in regard to the interior collection. In the first *stanza*, you are shewn a capital representation of Seneca dying in the bath, in touchstone or black marble; the eyes enamelled, and round his waist is a sash of yellow marble: this statue is amazingly well executed, the anatomy is rendered with a variety truly admirable; the effect of the great loss of blood appears to be on the surface of the veins, and in the muscles, particularly of the feet and legs; and the progress of dissolution in the whole figure is very affecting: the expression of his countenance is in conformity with the exalted sentiments of that martyred philosopher. This statue is placed in a grey marble basin, lined with red porphyry at the bottom, to appear like blood. In the same room, is a very fine wolf, of red Egyptian marble, sucking the founders of Rome. The famous hermaphrodite, estimated at Rome greatly superior to that at Florence, is ranked in the same class with the Seneca, as a *chef d'œuvre* of the powers of antique sculpture in their different styles. A Juno, her head and arms of white marble, her drapery finely done in porphyry to imitate the purple; her countenance is noble and majestic; her arms

arms are modern, and not as well done as they might have been.—A group, by Bernini, of elegant modern sculpture in one entire morsel, to the full as large as life: it is the finest thing I ever saw of his doing. The subject is the metamorphosis of Daphne into a laurel-tree; the moment the sculptor has taken, is the commencement of her transformation; Apollo pursues and has not quite come up with her; he appears quite out of breath, and astonished at the approaching change; her figure is perfectly beautiful! she is stopped in her flight by the quick growth of the bark and branches; young sprigs of laurel spring from her toes, and her feet and ankles are taking root, while the increasing bark makes a rapid progress to inclose her delicate limbs. She lifts up her extended arms, and from the ends of her stiffened fingers sprouts the budding laurel: her hair, which falls from her shoulders in beautiful ringlets, is partly blown by the wind, and begins to thicken into wreathing bays: her face is beautiful, and the sculptor has expressed in it a surprising mixture of agitating passions; it is plain she fears Apollo, but the effect of her prayers being granted, frightens her still more, so that regret, terror, and horror at the quick progress of the growing rind, are plainly to be perceived in her countenance

nance and action. On the pedestal are the following lines, written by Pope Urbano the Eighth, when he was a young man;

*Quisquis amans sequitur fugitivæ gaudia formæ,  
Fronde manus implet, baccas vel carpit amaras.*

There are two other groups of this famous statuary, by no means equal to this. They represent Æneas and Anchises, and a David throwing the stone at Goliath: the David is too old, but it seems Bernini meant to represent himself under that character. A modern piece of sculpture in *basso relievo*, by François Flamand; it was presented by the king of France to the Borgheze family: the figures are in touchstone, upon a ground of *lapis lazuli*, they represent Bacchanalian children.

A beautiful Diana antique; her body is one piece of agate. A Hercules Aventinus, with the bull's head under his club. A group of Faustina and her lover Carinus the gladiator, whom she loved to distraction. A most beautiful busto of Lucius Verus, the famous gladiator. I do not think I can convey to you a competent idea of the merits of this piece of sculpture: his attitude is that of rushing upon his adversary, every nerve and sinew shew strained to the utmost; his features are beautiful, his countenance haughty, fierce, and impatient; the symmetry of his limbs

is wonderful, and you every moment expect the onset : such is the movement and violent action expressed in this marble ; it is antique, and was sculpted by Agathias of Ephesus. A small group in bronze, the subject Dejanira borne away by the Centaur Nessus : it is finely done, particularly Dejanira, who struggles violently, and endeavours to leap off his back, on which she is forcibly held by one of his arms, whilst he gallops away with her at full speed. Another Centaur in marble ; a Cupid riding and breaking him as a horse, who strikes him with his fists, and kicks him with all his might : this is a most animated group. A Fawn, dandling an infant Bacchus ; a beautiful and highly esteemed antique. A Cameo, large as life, the face is antique and finely done ; it represents the busto of Alexander the great, in different coloured marbles : Michael Angelo has restored the casque and plume. The antique Fluter, is a Fawn about twelve years old, his attitude is elegant, and his air bespeaks a correct ear and masterly performance.

A modern Morpheus, by Algardi ; this god of sleep is here represented under the figure of a beautiful child, sleeping on his back ; in one hand he holds a bunch of poppies in a negligent manner : by him lies a toy, the Italians term a *giro* ; the softness

softness and sleepy look in his limbs and flesh, are surprisngly natural; he even seems to perspire: this statue is in black marble or touch-stone.

An antique *basso rilievo*, representing the young Telephus found by the Nymphs; one is sitting, the other standing; they are well done, and express great admiration and joy on the discovery of this beautiful child. The goat that suckled him is reposing; but what is very remarkable in this piece of antique sculpture is, that Telephus appears to be in swaddling clothes, swathed round in the same manner as now universally practised through Italy; and differing very little from the method of treating some children in England: the linen being rolled round and round them, till by close straining, a total deprivation of liberty is effected, to the great gratification of the vulgar nurses. In one of the rooms, is the oddest and ugliest bed I ever saw; it is carved in brown wood partly gilt, and is the clumsiest, awkwardest piece of lumber, that ever crowded a house: but it is of the sculpture of Michael Angelo, and was made for Pope Paul the Fifth, who bespoke and always lay in it. In another room is a chair with springs, being a trap to whosoever sits down in it, for they are held fast, and so confined, as to have no use of their  
limbs,

limbs. I am obliged to omit mentioning a great number of antique statues and pictures, by famous masters; this villa is so filled with rare articles of every kind. The garden is by no means beautiful; is laid out in a bad taste; the trees chiefly consist of yew, box, and bay, and other ever-greens, looking black and ragged. The flower garden is small and very formal, but this kind of garden admits of more formality than any other. There are two pretty aviaries in it, shaped something like bells and well laticed; here they keep turtles and some other birds. Amongst the flowers which are very fine, I was much surpris'd at the carnations; some were brown with yellow, others deep yellow with dark brown edgings; and some of a sky blue all over, extremely double, but of the bursting sort; they were well dress'd on pieces of gilt paste-board, and so large, as to cover a saucer or small dessert plate: had I not seen these blue carnations, smelt, and touch'd them, I should have esteem'd myself credulous for believing from books, or from ordinary report, that such really exist'd. I should have procur'd some of the seed, had not the gardener assur'd me it was not to be depended upon for producing the same sort; and that it frequently happen'd, that among a great number of seedlings,

lings, perhaps not above one has proved blue; they therefore, to secure the kind, propagate them by layers; I might have had some of these, but I considered they would be very troublesome to carry with us, and difficult to preserve through the rest of our tour; particularly over the *Apennines* and the *Mount Cenis*, where the colds and vicissitudes of weather must have infallibly destroyed them.

I forgot to mention, that there are statues and antique *basso relievos* in the gardens, some of the latter *Etruscan*, and very curious. Here is an odd idea (but antique,) a colossal masque; the eyebrows and beard formed of petrified water, the teeth are of stucco, a cascade of water falls from the mouth, which is of so ample a breadth, as to shew a considerable part of the garden through its jaws, like a landscape seen through an arch. The park is fine, and with a few alterations, would be esteemed such in England; the verdure lively, and the trees old and well grown; there are some deer in it. To this park the English are permitted, by the Borghese family, to repair twice a week, and play at cricket and football: we women go sometimes and see the sport, as do the Roman ladies and their fine *Abbatis*, who form a brilliant body of spectators.

\* \* \* \* \* I must hasten  
to

to give you a description of Frascati, when I shall conclude this long letter, which had I not the art of scribbling away very fast, I must have finished at Loretto: but I know you can read any writing of mine, and are not scandalized at interlineations, abridgments of words, neglects of stops, &c. &c.

Frascati, or ancient Tusculum, is about twelve miles from Rome, situated in *Latinum* or *La Campagna di Roma*; it is a bishop's see, now filled by the Cardinal of York. Tusculum is often marked in ancient history, as the scene of many memorable events; it was the birth-place of Cato the Censor, the great grand-father of Cato of Utica; it was rendered illustrious by the celebrated villa of Cicero, to which he frequently retired, where he composed those philosophical dissertations so justly admired in our times: Frascati boasts, with justice, the giving birth to Metastasio, who is unquestionably the first poet of modern Italy. The present town of Frascati is agreeably situated; it is not ancient: in the year 1550, there were no other remains than some vestiges of the ruins of Tusculum, over-grown with brambles and thorns; from this circumstance, the new town took its name of *Frascati*. It is built on the side of a hill, and commands a fine view of the country below, and of the

the many villas and gardens, which clothe and beautify the brow of the mountain.

*The principal Villas at Frascati.*

The Villa Aldrobrandini is very remarkable for its architecture, and decorations, and the gardens for their curious water-works. The approach is by avenues, which conduct to a fountain, near which are two flights of steps leading you to a terras, and from thence you mount to another terras on which the villa is built; it contains few marbles, and fewer good pictures, but here are some cielings tolerably painted; one represents David and Abigail, by Giuseppe d'Arpino; another Judith and Holofernes, and a third David and Goliah, all by the same master. They have contrived to introduce air into their apartments, by means of pipes operated upon by water, which also causes a sound resembling that of thunder; from the terraces is a fine and very extensive view. The gardens surprise and astonish by the water-works, and being formed upon falling grounds, they consist chiefly of terraces, rising one above the other. A building is constructed against the side of the mountain, (to cause the cascades to fall regularly from step to step) decorated with pilasters of the Ionic and Corinthian orders. Here are several statues made musical, by the means of water organs; a Centaur

Centaur sounds a horn, the blast of which may be heard (as they assert) at the distance of four miles; Pan plays various airs upon his pastoral flute of several tubes. A Lion and Tiger appear fighting, the water spurts to a considerable height from their mouths and nostrils; from the tiger proceeds a hissing and snarling sound, which is said to resemble the noise that animal makes when enraged: think what the melody must be, produced by this *trio*; I never heard any thing so disagreeably curious.—At the top of the water-building, appears the mountain covered with trees, and from its summit, a river precipitates itself down, forming a beautiful cascade, which supplies a fine fountain in a grotto, practised in one of the terraces and encrusted with petrified water: it then falls down the steps of the water-building, passes under a brass globe, which spurts water on every side; this is sustained by an Atlas, assisted by a Hercules, and accompanied by various allegorical statues, forms *jets d'eau*s, and at length breaks away over rocks and is lost. Amongst the statues that adorn this water-work, is a Silenus of antique Greek sculpture in marble of Paros, a much esteemed figure. In a large *sala* near the grand cascade, is a representation of mount Parnassus, with Apollo, the nine Muses, and Pegasus; they

they perform a concert, by means of a water organ concealed behind. The walls of the *sala* are painted in fresco, by Domenichino, and represent all the history and adventures of Apollo. One of the best, is that of the slaying of Marfyas, in the presence of three women and a satyr. This last figure implores Apollo on his knees, in behalf of Marfyas: his attitude, uplifted hands, and poor distressed countenance, is extremely affecting, the painter having blended the moving expression of a human creature, with the dumb pleadings of a beast for mercy. The *sala* is paved in mosaic, and in the center is a hole, over which a light ball is kept continually dancing in the air, through the action of a strong gulf of wind, forced up the hole by the water underneath. In these gardens is a wilderness, several fine shady walks, very few ever-greens, but a considerable number of large and well grown plane-trees; the effect is, that this garden appears much more natural and agreeable, than do in general those of Italy.

The Villa Conti is worth seeing, upon account of its gardens and water-works, and particularly for the ancient remains of eighteen vaulted buildings, said to have been part of the *menagerie* of Lucullus.

The

The Villa Taverna belongs to the Borghese family; it is very large, well built, habitable, and elegantly furnished; contains some good pictures, and several curiosities; amongst which, the following are the most remarkable; a small wooden crucifix, carved by a blind man. The victory of the arch-angel Michael over the dragon; this animal is represented with a woman's head, the face a portrait, and the countenance expressive of the most infamous and vile character, by Perugino. A St. Pietro, by Spagnoletto. Several animals, by Pioli. The portraits of the unfortunate Mother and Daughter, of the family of *Cenci*; the daughter is beautiful; I saw another portrait of her taken just before she was led out to execution; I think it was in the *Palazzo Colonna*, and I suppose I mentioned her story in one of my letters, so will not hazard the troubling you with a repetition of so shocking a tragedy.—The view from the villa is beautiful; the gardens are of great extent, and through them you mount up to the *Villa Dragone*, built in a much more elevated situation, which also belongs to the Borghese family. In these two villas, this noble family receive and entertain a great concourse of company, during the autumn season *per villagiature*. I have before mentioned this custom in Italy. This is  
a large

a large palace, they told us they could reckon 364 windows in it; I did not dispute it, lest they should count them, and we had not time to spare for such minuteness. The architecture is not very remarkable, the portico by Vignola has a good effect, being built of *pietro di perone*, which is of a fine brown colour. The building is rather too heavy; some paintings in this villa are tolerable; one at the end of the grand gallery, represents Solomon attended by his concubines sacrificing to idols, by Paulo Veronese. Here is an antique colossal head of Faustina, wife to Marcus Aurelius. A colossal busto of Antonius, and some other antiques not of the first class.

From the terras is a most beautiful view of Rome, and the country adjacent, till the sea bounds the prospect on that side; villages, ruins, and the *Lago Castiglione* with mountains, form another beautiful prospect; the whole is truly admirable, uniting all the advantages of a near, to all the grandeur of an extensive prospect.

The *Villa Bracchiano*, formerly *Montalto*, is a very pretty country house, neatly and elegantly furnished: here is a cieling painted by some of the scholars of Dominichino; the subject is the sun's course. The gardens, nothing remarkable; they consist principally of long walks regularly planted, where

where I observed a great number of cherry laurel amongst other evergreens.

The Villas Ludovici and Falconieri are worth seeing, principally for their water-works and gardens. In the villa Falconieri, is a cieling painted by Carlo Maratti. The subject, the birth of Venus : a Neptune in the sea, presents her with all the treasures of his element, while the Graces upon the shore attend with impatience to crown her with flowers ; it is well composed, and the figures graceful. The other cielings, painted by Ciro Ferri, represent the Seasons.

The ruins of the ancient town of Tusculum, are to be traced above a villa belonging to the Jesuits, called La Rufinella : here they shew what are called the grottos of Cicero ; but it is by no means certain, that these vestiges made part of his villa.

I must now take leave of you and of Rome, and shall write to you, when we shall have reached Loretto.

I am very sorry for an event, which has just happened here, to the universal regret of her family, her friends, her acquaintance, and the public in general : the amiable daughter of the duchess of Bracciano (the princess Chigi), died yesterday in child-bed ! She expired in the arms of her mother, perfectly resigned to her fate : amiable she was indeed, in mind, and in

person, therefore universally beloved, esteemed, and lamented !—Should an opportunity offer to write to you on the road, I shall not neglect it. Adieu, and wish me a happy pilgrimage *a la santissima Madonna*.

I am as ever, &c.

*P. S.* I promised to mention some of the principal artists now at Rome ; but am so pressed in time, that I cannot enlarge on their different manners and genius as they deserve ; I shall therefore be as concise as possible. Battoni, is I believe with justice, esteemed the best portrait painter in the world. Pickler father and son are admired by every body of taste and judgment, for their great abilities in the engraving on gems ; they execute *cameos* and *intaglios* in a great style for correction of design, elegance and finish : I believe no modern artist can be compared with them ; they are reasonable in their prices, in their dealings act with an honourable honesty, and deservedly meet with that encouragement, both from Italians and foreigners, that their excellent characters as artists, and their reputation as men of probity, so justly entitle them to. As for Piranese, his prints are sufficiently known to rank him among the first engravers on copper. He sometimes is carried by his taste, into  
romance :

romance : as a sculptor, he can do almost what he pleases ; when he is in good humour, he is very useful, informing, and agreeable to strangers ; he is what in England would be called a humourist, consequently uncertain and capricious. To deal with him, it is necessary to know before-hand, his peculiarities.—A miniature painter, of the name of Giorgio, paints the best pictures I have seen in that way : his colouring is glowing, his design correct, his finishing high, and his paintings will bear the strictest examination and comparison with the best miniatures of these times, and even of those of former days. The best miniature portrait painter, esteemed for taking likenesses at a moderate price, is one Marfigli ; he is a diligent attentive artist, and I make no doubt capable of great improvement. There are several young men, who are sent by their families and friends to Rome, in order to study painting, sculpture, &c. many of whom promise to attain to a great degree of excellence in those arts : it is a pity they are so frequently reduced to very disagreeable straits, by the ill-judged parsimony of their friends in England. The English gentlemen upon their travels, have indeed often generously supplied their wants, but as they cannot always enjoy such advantages, and this resource must, from its nature,

ture, be more or less precarious, it is self-evident, a young person has little encouragement to study the beauties of painting, sculpture, &c. &c. whilst in want of such necessaries, as makes the body suffer great inconvenience, and the mind a total want of ease. As for such English artists, who are really in affluent circumstances in England, and who travel into Italy to improve their taste and gratify their curiosity; the Italian artists are continually mentioning them with great encomiums on their genius, works, &c. Amongst these, no man holds a higher place than Mr. Strange, who has taken copies, and engraved prints, after the most capital original pictures in Italy; and executed them in so liberal a manner, as to give the beholder the true image and spirit of the original; not a hard and servile copy ever came from his hands. I must observe here, that I think base and laborious copyists do infinite injury to the world of artists. They excite false ideas, prejudice the minds of people who, not having seen the works of the great masters, disguised by their copies, are apt to suppose some glaring fault in the original; when, alas! most probably the defect may be found only in the self-sufficiency and conceit of a young artist; who flattered himself, perhaps, with improving upon

upon a Tiziano, a Corregio, or a Raffaello.

The post horses are waiting, the baggage fastened on to the carriage, so I must seal this letter, and send it immediately to the post-office. Adieu.

## LETTER XLVI.

Narni, the 25th May, 1771.

**W**E are well and safely arrived here without any accident, and might have reached Terni; though we set out late, had it not been for the warmth of the weather, which obliged us to lie by in the heat of the day; are therefore obliged to sleep here to-night. The face of the country the first three posts from Rome, is disgracefully uncultivated; no villages, no habitations (except post-houses), nothing but a dreary dismal waste, without track of man or beast to be seen. Having passed Rignano, the fourth post, the country begins to improve a little to Soreste, and then to Civetta-Castellana (the ancient Veia), and so on to Borghetto, Otricoli, and Narni, is a most beautiful country. Near Rignano our road lay over part of the Flaminian way; it is extremely firm

and good, composed of very large blocks of stone, so nicely fitted and put together, and withal so smooth, that the horses could with difficulty keep their footing. Civetta Castellano is situated in the ancient country of the Sabines: it is built on a rocky elevation, and appears like a small island; three sides of it being inclosed by as many little rivers, which falling into the valley below and uniting together, at length empty themselves into the Tiber. On the other side of the town is the citadel, behind which, the mountain immediately rises. Three sides of Castellano are inaccessible, on account of the perpendicularity of the rock on which it stands; and the fortress defends it so well from behind, as to render it (I should imagine) capable of sustaining a long siege. Some antiquarians have disputed the ancient Veia's being situated on this spot, but the greater number are of opinion, that it certainly was.

Having passed through Borghetto, we came to a fine bridge built by Pope Sixtus the Fifth, over the Tiber; it is called *Pontefelice*. The next post is Otricoli, near which place are remarkable hills, formed of what the Italians call *brescia*, round pebbles, which seem to have acquired that form from having been in the sea. The prospect from Rignano to Narni consists of hills, some clothed with woods, others with

with vines, and some crowded with villages: ruined fortifications and old towers appear amongst the trees; and frequent remains of Roman antiquities, as fragments of temples, mausoleums, &c. The valleys are narrow, fertile, and most *pittoresque*; imagination cannot feast upon a more variegated and beautiful assemblage of objects; but this variety of ground produces a most fatiguing effect to travellers, as you are repeatedly ascending or descending steep and rapid hills.

Narni is a small town, fifty-five miles from Rome; it is situated on the side of a hill, and forms an amphitheatre. At the foot of the town runs the Nera; here is a fine aqueduct of fifteen miles long, which conveys water through a mountain to the town, where it supplies several fountains. Our inn is tolerable, and we have not as yet met with insolent postillions, or extortioning post-masters, I hope a good omen for the remainder of our journey. I had made provision at Rome against our *eating cares*, of a piece of cold boiled beef, salted the English way, and some dozens of lemons; as we generally drink nothing but lemonade on our journey, on account of the heat of the weather, and the strong wines of this country being rather inflammatory, we have found our provision very necessary, the inn affording us nothing but

eggs not entirely rotten ; no butter, very stale and coarse bread, and not meat of any kind excepting goat's flesh, which I could not eat unless near starving ; the rank odour fills all the rooms in the house, and I have an unfortunate aversion to the smell of those animals *living* or *dead* : our host, it is true, offered us some half-starved old fowls, that were importunately cackling and demanding food at the door, and which he would have executed upon the spot if permitted, but we preferred our cold beef, to the fruits of such assassination, and have dined extremely well upon it.

To-morrow morning, M— goes to see the ruins of the famous bridge built by Augustus ; it is only half a mile from the town, but the way is disagreeable, and there is a descent just before you arrive at it, which they tell us is extremely rapid ; I do not think I shall accompany him, for fear of the heat and fatigue, dreading the slightest indisposition upon the road, as Italian inns are by no means commodious quarters for the sick.

I shall keep this letter open, and write in it occasionally, till I have an opportunity of sending it by post, which is so uncertain and so ill regulated, that I do not know when I may have it my power. Good night for the present.

May

May the 16th.—We are just arrived at the next post, Terni. M— went this morning to see the bridge: he says the way to it is much worse than was represented, the descent exceedingly rapid, and must be walked down as it is covered with with heaps of stones, over which he stumbled every moment, many of them rolling down after him, of size sufficient to break the legs, if you are not quick and cautious to avoid them; I am convinced this walk would not have suited me. When he came to the bridge, he found it had been built in the common manner, with mortar and cramped with iron: so little can the authors be depended upon, who all assert the contrary, and rank it as a wonder of the world; nor did it in any manner answer the idea he had formed of it, from what he had heard. Notwithstanding that, it is a great remain of antiquity, and would surprise and please much more, was it not so much over-rated. Five miles from hence, is the famous cascade, but I cannot see this neither, for the mountain is so steep, that there is no ascending it but upon a mule's back, or on a very sure footed horse; and in order to see it well, there are such very ugly steps to pass, that I fear I may break my neck, and M— wishes me ardently not to attempt it; at the same time, that he is sorry to perceive

my disappointment; it is a great mortification to me to be sure. He is just setting out, for he will see it; and I have been recommending strongly to him to walk, if he should find the road very steep. The inn here is tolerable, and the people a little humanized. Above Narni appears a town called Cesi, situated at the foot of ponderous Rocks, which seem to threaten its destruction every moment. The common people assert, that the town is fastened with adamantine chains (which they grant are invisible) to the neighbouring mountain; but it is certain that their law forbids, on pain of death, the felling any of the trees that grow amongst the rocks on the mountain above the town; by which it seems the rocks are supposed to be supported, and prevented from falling, by the roots of the trees being interlaced with them.

On the right, a little before we came to Terni, appears the village Collicipoli (the ancient Collis Scipionis,) and on a height *Torre Maggiore*, a kind of observatory, where the learned father Boscovick had geometrical instruments, in order to take the heights of the lands between Rome Rimini, &c. For this purpose he had poles fixed in the ground in proper places for measuring the angles, &c. and the stupidity and folly of the peasants impeded

ed this learned man as much as possible in his ingenious labours, by moving his marks, supposing them placed with design to aid him in the magic art, which they believed he studied.

In this country the peasants have a contrivance for catching pigeons. They tame a certain number, which they call *Mandarini*, who, flying before the wild ones, decoy them into trees, where the peasants remain concealed and catch great numbers of them. From Narni to this town, Terni, the road is very good; it lies through a fertile valley, seven miles long; the eye is conveyed over a wide extended country; the river Nera, like a great silver serpent, winding along in volumes through these plains, forms peninsulas, which, in some points of view, appear like islands of various shapes; some present you with rich meadows, others stately groves of oak, others are covered with corn and planted with regular rows of mulberry trees, which sustain the luxuriant branches of the vine, whose arms embrace the mulberry-trees from side to side; little hills of different heights and forms intersect each other; some of these are clothed with wood, and top'd with ruined towers and fortresses, and at the foot of them lie the humble villages, which, being very irregular, appear the more

more picturesque in prospect. This view extends itself wide of the road, and is the commencement of the plain of Rieta, compared by Cicero to the valley of Tempe.

Terni is just sixty-two miles from Rome, a city famous in antiquity; Tacitus the historian was born here, and several other remarkable personages. Here are still to be seen some small vestiges of antiquities; in the bishop's garden, is a fragment of an amphitheatre and some *souteraines*: in the church of S. Salvadoro, are some small remains of a temple of the Sun, and part of a temple of Hercules in the cellars belonging to the Jesuits. M— is returned, and quite charmed with the cascade; it is called *Caduta delle Marmora*, and is formed by the river Velino, which falls above two hundred feet in height into the Nera. This prodigious fall of water descends in three cascades; its spray forms curious incrustations, some of which he brought me in his pocket. He says, the colours seen in the drops of water, which by being violently dashed up in the air fall again in showers, are equal in beauty to the glowing tints in prisms; he believes there cannot be any cascade in the world more extraordinary and more romantically beautiful than this. He placed himself in different parts of the mountain, to view it in all its glory,

glory, and the variety of its appearances exceeded his expectations; at the same time he assured me, I never should have been able, on a mule or on foot, to have clambered up and down the frightful precipices that he did, for he was obliged [to walk a considerable way, it not being possible in some descents for his mule to keep her feet, or avoid being in the utmost danger of falling down the declivities, even without a rider; I dare say you are very glad I did not go. Adieu, our carriage waits.

(In continuation.) We have reached Spoleto, where we sleep to-night, though only twenty-one miles from Terni; but as we did not set out early, and met with some impediments in the way, which occasioned much loss of time, we are determined not to press on, but to remain here quietly till to-morrow morning. Having quitted Terni, the road was tolerable till we came to a stupendous Appenine called the *Somma*, about six miles before we reached Spoleto. The road by which we ascended is a prodigious work, cut out of the living rock; it winds along the side of the Appenine; is but just broad enough for a carriage; is as hard as marble, and almost as smooth, but not an inch allowed for the consequences of the starting or waywardness of a horse, or the smallest inattention  
on

on the part of the drivers. The mountain rises to the clouds perpendicularly straight on one side, with a precipice astonishingly deep, and almost as rapid on the other side, without any wall, hedge, pale, or fence of any kind. At the bottom of the precipice runs a river like a torrent, which seen from the road appears no broader than a skeyne of silk. We whirled along the edge of this mountain in a constant gallop, drawn by four of the strongest, largest, and most furious black horses I ever saw; the postillions making the most frightful shouts to encourage their pace, and urging them on by whipping them incessantly, the horses squeaking the whole time. This method of driving, it seems, is your best security, for if the horses were suffered to recollect themselves, or even to slacken their pace, they would be subject to start, or might fear the precipice, and from apprehension grow restive, which would be certain destruction to themselves and those they conveyed; but by being kept constantly attentive to their masters, and obliged to exert all their strength, we happily attained the summit of the Appenine, without any accident. A carriage had need to be strong and well put together that goes this road, for should any article of it give way, the consequences could not fail of being  
disa-

disagreeable, if not fatal. We stopped at a house on the top of the mountain, for refreshment; where we had a high regale: the velocity of our motion, and the freshness of the air, had gained us an appetite, and we fared deliciously, in our carriages, on wild boar ham, broiled for us in thin slices, accompanied with plates of sliced truffles, which they heated over the fire in a moment, and proved an excellent ragout. Having eat heartily, and forgot the fright I had suffered from the precipice, I was curious to know the method of conserving and dressing these truffles; so I called for the mistress of the house (for there is a woman in this inn), and she told me, that when they are quite fresh they must be washed extremely clean, in water just warm, then in cold wine, and left to steep in this latter for about a quarter of an hour; after which they are cut in slices, then hung up in baskets to dry in the air under cover, so as to protect them from the sun, rain, and dew: when crisp, they are put into paper bags and kept in a dry place; they are dressed in pewter or silver plates, over a lamp or charcoal, putting to them some oil, an anchovy, and mustard: for those who do not like oil, they substitute butter, which you may believe the English *Forrestieri* generally prefer. I purchased some bags of her truffles, and a  
very

very fine ham of the wild boar, discreetly providing against our necessities, in case we should not on our journey meet with equally good provision. Having descended the Appenines, the road lying amongst the nether mountains, very narrow and steep in several places, we were overtaken by a dreadful storm of thunder and lightning; the claps were loud as cannon, and seemed quite close to us; the lightning flashed and darted along the ground; the air was poisoned with the smell of sulphur; it poured cascades instead of rain, as if all the clouds in the heavens had burst over our heads: we pressed on to reach Spoleto, the storm augmenting, the horses screaming and starting every moment; however, we arrived safe, and without the least accident. The storm continued, and increased; the claps of thunder redoubling, so that there was not half a minute's cessation between: the lightning fell twice into the ground amongst the mountains, but did no hurt. This storm lasted full three hours from its commencement, without cessation, and concluded with two amazing claps of thunder, re-echoed from the mountains, like what I should suppose might be the explosion at the springing of a mine.

Spoletto is a considerable town, eighty-eight miles from Rome, situated on the  
top

top of a mountain. One of the antique gates of this city is still nearly perfect; it is called *Porta Fuga*; on it you read this inscription, indicating the cause of its appellation.

*Annibal cæsis ad Trasyminum Romanis, urbem Roman infenso agmine petens, Spoletum magna suorum clade repulsus, insigni fugæ portæ nomen fecit.*

The Cathedral is almost entirely built of marble; they shew an image of the Virgin, pretended to have been made by St. Luke. A picture, by Guercino, representing St. Cecilia and two monks, praying to the Virgin, who appears in a glory, which is infinitely more valuable; its colouring is good, but the ærian perspective is not well preserved in the glory. The Church of St. *Filipo di Neri* contains a good picture of this saint, who is invoking the Virgin; the painter's name not known. There are some palaces here also, and several other churches, but we are too much fatigued to visit them. They told us, there are antique remains of a temple of Jupiter, in the convent of St. Andrea; and of a temple of Mars, in the church of St. *Isacco*, but we have not seen them. There is a wonderful aqueduct to be seen to-morrow morning, before we pursue our route;

route; it is about two miles from hence. We are tolerably well lodged in our inn; and as it is summer, do not suffer much by the want of curtains to the beds. Our fare consists of pigeons, strongly resembling crows, and plenty of fried liver and brains, very bad soup, with gizzards of various birds swimming therein; in short, the ham and truffles are by no means indifferent to us. Good night.

## LETTER XLVII.

Serravalle, 17th of May.

**T**HIS morning M— went on horseback from Spoleto, to see the famous aqueduct two miles from thence; it conveys, from one hill to another over a deep valley, two considerable bodies of water, which flow upon arches built like bridges; the centre is a double arch, one being built over the other, the height about two hundred and fifty feet; the other arches gradually decline in height, as they spring from the sloping sides of two mountains, the water being thus conveyed to the town of Spoleto.

When we had completed the first post from Spoleto, to a place called Vene, we turned

turned off a few paces from the road, to see the ruins of a beautiful little temple, built near the source of the once famous river Clitumnus; it is called the Temple of Clitumnus, supposed to have been dedicated to that river god. The plan is an oblong square, it has four columns, and two Corinthian pilasters, the portico is vaulted within; on the frieze are *basso relievos*, representing olive branches, grapes, and leaves finely executed. The two centre pillars of the four are sculpted from top to bottom, describing laurel leaves, placed in alternate rows, the other two are fluted in spiral lines; the pediment they support is beautifully proportioned. Its two entrances, which were at each end, are quite in ruins. The little room in the interior of the temple, measures only ten feet by eight: this small edifice is built of an iron grey marble, which appears to have been highly polished.

The river Clitumnus, at this time but a shallow brook, runs at its foot: its banks were formerly famous for feeding white cattle\*, which Pliny attributes to the effects

\* — On the cheerful green

The grazing flocks and lowing herds are seen,

The warrior horse here bred, is taught to train,

There flows Clitumnus thro' the flow'ry plain;

Whose

fects of the water ; be that as it may, the white were sought for sacrifice, in preference to every other colour, as the most acceptable to the gods ; which when not to be easily had, the victims were rubbed over with chalk. We observed many oxen, and other white horned cattle, upon its banks, which I was determined to believe the descendants of the antique breed. From some poor people who were fishing here, I bought a very fine trout, and a large silver eel : on the former we dined well at Foligno, and have just supped on the latter ; for Foligno or Seravelle afford but live pigeons, and wretched fowls alive also, whose existence we resolved not to shorten, to gratify the luxury of dining or supping. But to return to our route from Vene ; we had a very good road to Foligno, which is twelve miles from Spoleto, and one hundred from Rome. On each side of the road, our view was of a rich country, close planted with white mulberries, fycamores, elms, and vines. The corn grows between the rows of trees, and here the peasant's toil is rewarded with four rich harvests ; mulberry leaves for the  
 silk-

Whose waves for triumphs after prosp'rous war,  
 The victim ox, and snowy sheep prepare.—

DRYDEN'S Translation of VIRGIL.

Book II. of the GEORGICS.

silk-worms, the mulberry fruit, grapes, and corn. Foligno is a large town, but contains nothing curious except a convent, called *La Comtessa*, where are some very fine pictures: a capital one by Raffaello, bespoken of that great master by *Segismondo di Comitibus*, who was secretary to the Pope, and who presented it to his niece, then in this convent; it represents the Virgin in a glory seated on a cloud, supported by the rainbow, holding the infant Jesus in the midst of cherubims; below appears St. John, St. Francis on his knees, a cardinal in the same attitude, and admirably well done; a St. Jerome standing behind him; a little angel in the centre, who holds with both hands a tablet, but without any inscription. I could expatiate for an hour on the different beauties of this picture; the Virgin answers precisely the idea I have formed of her; a noble simplicity, blended with perfect innocence, and piety, dwell upon her face; grace, dignity, and complacence, are diffused over her whole person. The infant appears in the attitude of struggling to get away from his mother, in order to grant the prayers of the saints below; his figure is animated, and his benign countenance seems to breathe forth divine love. The St. John is finely done; he appears with all the characteristics of his forest education,

and

and a noble firmness of mind in his countenance; the colouring is rich and glowing, and in my opinion this picture should be classed amongst the *chef d'œuvres* of *Raffaello*. Our fine road now ended, and we again ascended and descended the Appenines, the way being extremely rough and rapid in many places; near the Saravella the mountains seemed closing upon us, shooting one above the other, till they rose far above the clouds, and the road extremely narrow and winding, when all at once the little sky we could see, grew black, the thunder rolled, and the lightning and stench exceeded that of yesterday; the whole artillery of Heaven seemed now pointed upon this narrow valley: with much difficulty the postillions kept the horses to their draught, the rain and wind beating strong against their faces. In about an hour or less we reached this most wretched of all villages; the storm continued with the utmost violence between five and six hours; though in this inn, I cannot say we were in shelter, the storm and rain beating through and through the house; I laid myself down upon the staircase, which is of very rough stones, and expected every moment the house to come level with the ground: what induced me to chuse the staircase was, that the wall was arched in a vault over head, which made  
me

me think it the most secure place. The stench of the sulphur was such, and the closeness of the air, that it made me extremely sick, and I apprehended the being suffocated at every instant. M— never left me for a moment, but kindly endeavoured to console me, by assuring me these storms must be common amongst the Appenines; that the people of the house did not appear much terrified, &c. &c. but I very frequently could not hear what he said, so loud was the noise of the thunder: the lightening mean-time darting all about us, of a livid blue and white: the post horses never ceased screaming and kicking in the stables: at length it ceased.

When I had recovered from my fright and sickness, our host came and was ardent to know what we would have for supper; and not being able to get rid of his importunity, I recollected our Clitumnus eel, which I ordered to be dressed, and to send up whatever he had in the house, which upon enquiry proved to be nothing but *bread* and *eggs*, not *newly* laid. I mentioned to you before, that we spared the lives of the old fowls. Our bed-chamber has casements to it; the walls are white-washed, and adorned with bad pictures of *Santa Casa* and *Nostra Dama di Loretto*; the beds are not quite so bad as many we have already experienced, and I expect

expect to sleep profoundly; but first I must mention one circumstance, which is, that though it generally thunders every day during the summer amongst these Appenines, yet this storm was so uncommonly violent, that a young woman, the wife of one of the helpers in the stable, and who had been born and bred in this village, was so terrified, that she ran along the street in the midst of the storm to her mother's cottage; thinking in her fright she should be more secure if with her old mamma.—This miserable village is in a manner shut in amongst Appenines heaped on Appenines, so that the sun's beams are rarely visitants here; but clouds and fogs ever hover over the mountains, seldom yielding more than a kind of doubtful light: this so much surpasses a romantic situation, that one may pronounce it, a long and narrow pit, big with horror. M— calls it a thunder-cup.

Loretto, May the 19th. Here we safely arrived yesterday in the evening, having passed over nothing but mountains, and traced the brinks of dreadful precipices, whose perpendicular sides were furnished with vast craggy rocks, whilst mountain torrents roar loudly at their feet: this sort of road continued more or less alarming, till a little before we reached Loretto. Near Tolentino, part of our carriage broke,  
and

and we were detained above an hour to have it mended : through the kind providence of the almighty God we received no hurt; and happy was it for us, that we were so near a town when this accident happened. Tolentino is thirty miles from Loretto; there is nothing remarkable to be seen there. Macerata, which is twelve miles from thence, is built on the summit of a mountain, from whence the Adriatic is plainly discernible. About two miles and a half from Macerata, after having passed over a very long wooden bridge, which crosses the river Potenza, are some vestiges of the ruined town of Recina : some remains of a theatre are here said to be discernible, but we did not stop to see them. From Macerata to San Buchetto, the face of the country improved upon us very much, is much cultivated, and planted with mulberry trees, &c. From San Buchetto to Loretto, which is the last post, there is a great deal of ascent and descent, but more of the former than the latter; the road is tolerable, and very near Loretto is perfectly good. From Foligno to this town is about fifty-five miles, so that Loretto is nearly an hundred and fifty miles from Rome. When within two or three miles of this town, the road is infested by sturdy boys and girls half naked, who pursue travellers begging, singing,

ing, dancing, running and tumbling over and over; their numbers and clamour increase, till happily gaining the town they disperse. It is but just to confess at the same time, that they are the most complimentary beggars in the world; for when tumbling fails to excite your charity, they prostrate themselves, and kiss the ground you are about to pass over, invoking your beneficence, and giving you all the titles of dignity they ever heard of; and if those fail, then they give you some of their own invention, as for example to M— *Felice sposo della Madonna*; to me *Eccellentissima Madonna*. On the road coming into Loretto, we overtook two pilgrims; one was dressed in a pilgrim's habit of pale olive green lutestring, ornamented with scallop shells; he was a young stout looking man, with red hair tied behind in a ribbon; he appears to me to be a Scotch gentleman: he endeavoured to conceal himself as much as possible from our observation, and was particularly anxious to prevent our seeing his face. The other pilgrim was a poor old priest, who was employed in dragging along a very large wooden cross; however there was a little wheel fastened to the end of it, to lighten the draft; these two persons were not in company with each other.

Loretto

Loretto is situated on a plain at the top of a mountain; it has a clean, deserted, and bleak look: the houses make but a very mean appearance; the principal street consist for the most part of small shops, in which are sold little else besides beads for rosaries, gold and silver ornaments for the same, worked in fillagree, small brass bells, much bought by the country people, as preservatives against thunder and lightning, brown paper caps to cure the head-ach, and broad ribbons with the effigies of *Noftra Dama di Loretto*, painted on them, to be worn by women in childbirth.

The inn is very indifferent and dirty; they served us in the dirtiest pewter-plates I ever saw, and greasy trenchers. The provisions consisted of very stale fish, ragoued in oil and highly seasoned with garlic; peas ragoued also, and cabbage; but all was so disgusting, that we were obliged to feed upon some very bad cheese, and the bread; it being a fast day, was plentifully seasoned with coriander and anise-seed, which to me is disagreeable. Our beds were tolerable, and we slept well. We have employed this morning in viewing the *Santa Casa*, &c. The church, which contains the Holy House, is very large; the piazza before it not yet nearly finished; the architecture of the church is

neither beautiful nor remarkable; the door of entrance is of bronze, sculpted in *basso rilievo*; the subject relates to Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, &c. and are not ill executed. Towards the further end of the church is found *la Santissima Casa*, built of a kind of stone which exactly resembles brick; the outside is incrusted with marble, as a case for it; this casing is loaded with various ornaments of sculpture, all heavy and ill done. They tell you, that the stones with which this house is built never wear, although rubbed and scraped continually by the pilgrims; yet the marble pavement which is modern, is extremely worn by their knees, continually trailing themselves round and round it, one after the other. As I was looking up at the architecture, and not attending to my footing, I made a *faux pas* and stumbling, tumbled over a sturdy female pilgrim, who was proceeding on her knees, saying her prayers, and in a great heat and sweat; I could not help laughing, and I begged her pardon with the best grace I could, the other pilgrims laughed also, at the oddity of the accident; the woman was surprised, but not angry. The *Santa Casa* is surrounded with a great number of silver lamps (very thin), which burn constantly. In the interior is placed the miraculous image, with the infant Jesus:  
the

the Virgin is made of cedar, but having been in a fire, from which it was miraculously preserved, is as black as a coal. She is dressed in a very bad taste, with a farthingale, or old fashioned hoop-petticoat: the outside garment is gold or silver stuff, I am not clear which; she is in such a cloud of smoke proceeding from the lamps, that I could not be certain; you are not permitted to touch her. She had several *crochets* of diamonds, reaching from the top of her stomacher down to the hem of her petticoat, but they appeared to me to be composed of a great mixture of stones, none of any great value, and many very indifferent; I saw none so fine, or so large, as some belonging to the duchess of *Montilivretti* at Rome: she wears a triple crown set with jewels, and a black gauze veil; she has new clothes every year, and her veil when she puts it off is cut into small pieces, and sold or given to devout persons and genteel pilgrims, as a charm against witchcraft. As to the coloured precious stones they are by no means good, being for the most part clouded and streaky, and many of them no better than the root of emerald, amethyst, ruby, &c. Here are some lamps of fine gold, but extremely thin. Several votive gifts, presented by various princes and great people, decorate the image; such as hearts,

chains of gold set with precious stones, crucifixes, &c.; in particular a statue of an angel, shewn for gold, but which appears to me to be silver gilt; he is in a kneeling posture to the Virgin, and offers a gold or gilt heart, set with diamonds, rubies, and pearls. This statue was presented to the Virgin, by James the Second's Queen of England, who was of the house of Este, in order that the Virgin in return might give her in exchange a son; her gift was accepted, her request was granted, and she produced the *Pretender*. On the other side of the Virgin is a like statue; this is of silver, was presented at the same time, and offers a heart in the like manner; the gift of Laura, widow of Alphonfus the Fourth, duke of Modena, and mother of James the Second's Queen. Here is also another silver angel, presenting Louis the Fourteenth (who is made of gold) upon a cushion: they told us, this golden infant was made exactly of the same weight with the living infant when just born. The niche in which the Virgin is placed, is lined with silver ornamented with gold; but I suspect many of the plates that appear to be gold, to be no more than silver gilt. The door-case and architraves of the window are ornamented with plates of the same metal: it was by this window, that the angel Gabriel entered to salute the Virgin. There

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is a fine altar at her feet, and before it a fine balustrade, which separates this *Sanctum Sanctorum* from the rest of the house, which in size is no more than thirty feet by thirteen, and about eighteen high. The canons who shew this place, were extremely polite and obliging to us; they admitted us behind the sanctuary to the holy chimney or hearth, which is exactly beneath the nich wherein the Virgin stands, and in which fire-place or hearth is a trunk that belonged to her: here they shewed us the *Santissima Scodella* or porringer, which is of coarse blackish earthen-ware, broke in two or three places and stuck together with mastic; this they assert to be the same in which the pap was made for the infant Jesus; the canon permitted me to take it in my hand, which was a prodigious favour, and I desired him to shake about in it some rosaries, chaplets, &c. which I had purchased to present to some Roman Catholic friends in France, and I begged him to do every thing by them, which should render them *extraordinarily efficacious*; so they have been shook about in the porringer, rubbed to the holy walls, and to the image and all; he could not help smiling at my request. There are but eight canons, they are the only gentlemen that inhabit this city; here also is a widow lady, a marchioness, \* \* \* \* \*

the other citizens are common and poor people.

We were much disappointed at the sight of the treasury ; the treasures they keep shut up in presses, and are by no means very valuable : here you find a few indifferent cameos ; the gems in general, and in particular, are but a paltry collection. The famous pearl appears to be formed of three or four grown together ; it is a mishapen mass not fine, though they have helped it here and there with some colouring, in order to induce *the faithful* to fancy they discover a rude representation of the Virgin seated upon a cloud.

Her scarlet camlet gown which she wore when the angel Gabriel appeared to her, is inclosed with great care in a glass-case.

The pictures are all very indifferent, excepting two ; one of which is by Annibal Carrachi, and represents the nativity of the Virgin. The other is attributed to Raffaello ; the figure of the Virgin is faulty, her head not being well placed on her shoulders, but the infant is so well done and so natural, that at the first view it appears like a living child ; the keeping and clair obscure being admirably conducted. They told us, that lord Exeter would have given them sixteen hundred pounds sterling for this picture. We were offered a sight of the cellars, which they said contained

tained one hundred and forty very large tons of wine; out of one of the tons may be drawn three sorts of wine from the same spicket, but we declined visiting them. Here is a *Speziale* or apothecary's shop, where all sorts of common drugs, particularly ointments, *Venice treacle*, *plasters*, &c. are provided for the use of the pilgrims *gratis*: here is also a great number of large gally-pots of fine earthen-ware, painted by Raffaello and Giulio Romano, well worth the attention of the curious. The priest who shewed us the Santa Casa was so obliging, as to present me with some morsels of *Nostra Dama's* black veil of last year stuck upon a paper, signed and sealed, &c. as indubitable attestations of the identity of the said veil, &c. The great reputation of the Santa Casa, has much declined within these few years from a lack of devotion in mankind; our conductor and some other holy men we conversed with, owned the Virgin had not received a gift of value from any prince or crowned head, for these sixty years past; and that few pilgrims came now, compared with the numbers that used to visit Loretto some years past: it is remarkable that this day, one of the first in the year for the arrival of pilgrims, we saw no more than twelve of them enter Loretto. About ten pilgrims on an ave-

rage yearly arrive from England, where the people of Loretto believe those of the Roman Catholic religion stick up more strictly to the principles of their faith, than do those of France or Italy; and I join them in opinion. They assured us, that for many years past, scarce any great people had performed the journey; and added, *their pilgrimage need not be considered by them as very painful, as they might perform it in a post chaise or otherwise, provided they walk but a little, when the weather proved favourable.* Pilgrims are fed and lodged gratis on the road, and during their stay in the town. Those we saw were all common people, sturdy lazy vagabonds, who preferring sloth and idleness to labour and industry, set out on what they call a pilgrimage, as it costs them nothing; and I make no doubt, fail not to pilfer what they can on their route: I should be as much afraid to meet a *posse* of these pilgrims, as to encounter a band of robbers in a lonely place. The Adriatic Sea is but one mile from the city, and were not the Turks persuaded the treasures of Loretto would not sufficiently reward their trouble, it seems probable they might land and take the town, *porringer, santa casa*, treasury, and all its trumpery, with the greatest ease.

To-morrow morning we depart for Bologna; our journey from Rome has hitherto

therto been to me a painful pilgrimage, I assure you; and my expectation here thoroughly disappointed.

*P. S.* If you should be still curious in regard to the Santa Casa, I have provided myself with a book, containing various views of it, its treasures, its journey through the clouds, its conveyance by angels, its nightly flights from region to region, which you shall study at your leisure, *if you chuse it.* The annual landed revenue of the holy house amounts to fifteen thousand pounds sterling; no bad *broth* for their *porringer*.

Enclosed you have a letter from father Gillibrand, an English jesuit at Loretto, to M—, to satisfy his inquiries in regard to the holy house.

“ Dear Sir,

“ Loretto, 21 May, 1771.

“ **I** Tried several methods to transcribe  
 “ the short history you desired; but find-  
 “ ing it impossible, on account of some oil  
 “ spilt upon the stone, was obliged to send  
 “ you a translation of it from the Latin,  
 “ found in an ancient MS. of the Au-  
 “ gustinian library at Rome, and con-  
 “ fronted with one of Taremani; bearing  
 “ date 1460. This accuracy of mine,  
 “ you will find, upon comparing it with  
 “ the

“ the French, to be met with in a small  
 “ French book I gave to Mr. Fullerton,  
 “ to whom my grateful respects, as also  
 “ to Mr.— lady, family, &c. yea to all  
 “ the English there.

*A succinct Account of the miraculous Convey-  
 ance of the Blessed Virgin Mary's house,  
 from Nazareth to Loretto.*

“ The chapel of Loretto was the house  
 “ of the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of  
 “ our Lord Jesus Christ, and stood in a  
 “ city of Galilee, called Nazareth, in  
 “ which the Blessed Virgin herself was  
 “ born, brought up, and saluted by the  
 “ angel; in which also she bred her son  
 “ Jesus Christ, unto the age of twelve  
 “ years. After Christ's ascension the apos-  
 “ tles and disciples, reflecting on the ma-  
 “ ny divine mysteries wrought in the said  
 “ house, decreed by common consent to  
 “ consecrate it into a chapel, and dedicate  
 “ it in honour and memory of the Blessed  
 “ Virgin Mary, which they accordingly  
 “ did, and in it had divine service. St.  
 “ Luke the Evangelist is said to have  
 “ made an image of the Blessed Virgin,  
 “ which is kept there to this day; the  
 “ people of these parts had it in great ho-  
 “ nours and devotions, while they were  
 “ Christians; but no sooner did they em-  
 “ brace

“ brace the Mahometan religion, than the  
 “ angels conveyed it to a castle called  
 “ Fiucene in Sclavonia; yet not being ho-  
 “ noured there as it ought, the angels car-  
 “ ried it over the sea, and fixed it in a  
 “ wood belonging to a noble woman,  
 “ called Laurata of Recanati, whence it  
 “ takes the name of our Lady of Loretto:  
 “ but many robberies and murders being  
 “ committed, by reason of the great con-  
 “ course of nations to see it, the angels  
 “ again removed it to a neighbouring hill  
 “ belonging to two brothers, who falling  
 “ out about the presents made to it, caus-  
 “ ed the angels once more to remove it to  
 “ the high road, where it now stands  
 “ without foundations, attended by many  
 “ signs, wonders, and favours.

“ The people of Recanati came to ex-  
 “ amine it, and finding it so, were afraid  
 “ of its falling, and therefore caused it to  
 “ be supported by a more substantial wall  
 “ and well founded, as is seen to this day.  
 “ During all this, no one could be met  
 “ with, to give any account of its origin,  
 “ or how it came there, until the Blessed  
 “ Virgin herself appeared to an aged per-  
 “ son devoted to her service, and revealed  
 “ to him the whole, in the year of our  
 “ Lord 1296. He divulged it immedi-  
 “ ately to several prudent men, who,  
 “ bent upon knowing the truth, selected  
 “ sixteen

“ sixteen notable sworn men, to visit the  
 “ holy sepulchre and the city of Nazareth:  
 “ these taking the measure of the said  
 “ chapel, found its foundations left at  
 “ Nazareth, to correspond to a hair, with  
 “ an inscription upon a neighbouring wall,  
 “ setting forth, that there had been such a  
 “ house there, but that it was vanished  
 “ they did not know where; the aforesaid  
 “ sixteen men attested all this to be true,  
 “ upon oath. From that time forward,  
 “ all christian people had and have a great  
 “ veneration for it, since the Blessed Vir-  
 “ gin Mary has and does favour it with  
 “ innumerable miracles daily, as experi-  
 “ ence shews.

“ Here was a hermit called brother  
 “ Paul de Sylve, who lived in a hut in the  
 “ wood, not far from the chapel, and went  
 “ to it every morning to recite the divine  
 “ office. He was a man of a very abste-  
 “ mious and sanctified life, and said, now  
 “ about ten years ago, that upon the feast  
 “ of the nativity of the Blessed Virgin,  
 “ viz. the eighth of September, two hours  
 “ before day, and the wind blowing clear,  
 “ he saw a bright light descend from hea-  
 “ ven upon the said chapel, about twelve  
 “ feet in height, and six in breadth; it  
 “ disappeared as soon as it came to the  
 “ chapel; this, he said, was the Blessed  
 “ Virgin that came there on her feast.

“ To

“ To render all this the more credible,  
 “ two worthy men of this town, the one  
 “ called Paul Ranalduece, and the other  
 “ Francis, alias Prior, have often attested  
 “ the same to me, the provost of Tere-  
 “ mani, and governor of this church.  
 “ The first affirmed, that his grandfather’s  
 “ grandfather, saw the angels carry it  
 “ across the sea and place it in that wood;  
 “ and that he, with several others, had of-  
 “ ten visited it in the same wood; the  
 “ second, who was then one hundred and  
 “ twenty years of age, often told me, that  
 “ he himself had visited it in that wood;  
 “ he also said to many other creditable  
 “ people, that his grandfather had a house  
 “ in that wood, in which he lived, and  
 “ was tenant to the said chapel; but  
 “ that it was carried away, and placed  
 “ upon the hills of the two brothers as  
 “ aforesaid, during his own time. So  
 “ ends the story.

“ I believe I could cite a hundred that  
 “ have written in defence of the above,  
 “ and only five or six against it: but the  
 “ oddness of its circumstances, as evident  
 “ to sense, have greater influence with  
 “ me, than all authority. It could not be  
 “ built in one night, so as to look a thou-  
 “ sand years old next morning. It is  
 “ built without a foundation (a thing ne-  
 “ ver done before or since to any other  
 “ house)

“ house) and yet has stood even here near  
“ five hundred years, with walls near half  
“ a foot out of the perpendicular, and  
“ wood in the walls as hard as ever, yea a  
“ beam under every body’s feet has out-  
“ lasted marble floors. The walls are of  
“ stone, cut out of the living rock, of a  
“ sort not to be found in Italy, but only  
“ in a quarry yet existing near Nazareth;  
“ it is not supported by any thing, and  
“ never was yet repaired : facts are stub-  
“ born proofs, and can never ply to pre-  
“ judice. Excuse the liberty of declaring  
“ my sentiments, and rest assured of my  
“ being in every thing else, dear Sir,

“ your most obedient humble servant,

“ R. Gillibrand.”

“ P. S. I should be glad to know where  
“ you are and how you are, from any part  
“ of the globe.”

LETTER.

## L E T T E R XLVIII.

Ancona, May the 20th, 1771.

**L**AST night I sent a letter for you to the post; as every step we now take brings us nearer to you, my letters will reach you in more frequent succession. We have been this morning to see the famous triumphal arch, erected in honour of the Emperor Trajan, his wife, and sister. Its situation is upon an eminence above the mole, and must make a fine appearance when viewed from the sea, being built of marble of Paros, of a beautiful kind, and full of shining particles, which glitter in the sun: it is in good preservation though in so exposed a situation; and before it was spoiled of its bronze statues, trophies, &c. must have been a most noble monument of Roman magnificence. From this arch there is a fine view of the Adriatic and the coast. The mole when completed will be a stupendous work; it is carried on solely by the galley-slaves; the cement used in the building is Puozolane, brought in the boats from Puozzoli and the coasts of Baia: we do not think it worth while to lie by here, although Lalande mentions some pictures in the church; so  
shall

shall depart as soon as the post-horses are ready, and press forward to reach Bologna as soon as possible. This sea-port is not an ugly town; the situation is eligible, and the people appear more industrious, richer, cleaner, and happier than in most other Italian towns; I except the great capitals: the causes of this difference are self-evident, viz. toleration of all religions, and a permission to people of every nation to settle here: it is most remarkable, that this place should belong to the Holy See and yet enjoy such privileges. On one of the gates of the town is this inscription,

*Alma fides, procures, vestram quæ condidit urbem.  
Gaudet in hoc, sociâ vivere pace, loco.*

On this coast they take a most extraordinary species of fish, which are generally sent to Rome and much esteemed there; they are found enclosed in stones; have a disgusting, naked, and raw appearance; and resemble more a kind of clear transparent flesh than fish: I believe the high estimation they are held in, arises more from the difficulty of procuring them, than from any other reason, as we thought them but very indifferent eating. The horses are ready, so adieu for the present.

Rimini;

Rimini, 12 o'Clock at night.

This has been a hard day's journey, and though tired, I resume my pen for you: we have come to-day eight posts and a half, which is about sixty-seven miles, and did not leave Ancona as early as we should have done; the viewing the arch and mole took us up some time, and accounts for our late arrival at this town: half our road lay close by the sea-side, and sometimes a little in the sea till we reached Pesaro. The prospect is very agreeable the whole way; on one side the Adriatic, and on the other a fertile country well cultivated and well peopled. Sinegaha, Fano, and Pesaro are places noted in history, but do not contain any very remarkable antiquities, pictures, &c. Our road lay over great part of the Flaminian way, which terminates with this town. It is famous in antiquity for being the first place that Cæsar possessed himself of after he had passed the Rubicon. On entering it, we passed under a famous triumphal arch of Augustus; this place is now an inconsiderable sea-port. Good night, tomorrow we hope to reach Bologna.

May 22, Bologna. Here we safely arrived last night, after a long day's journey; at least I thought it so, the hot weather greatly augmenting the fatigue of travelling.

velling. We quitted Rimini yesterday morning, and passed the river Mareccia, over the beautiful marble antique bridge, composed of five arches of equal dimensions. From Rimini our road lay through Santa Giustina, and we crossed a river called the Luso. Savignano is a small village a few miles from thence: leaving this place, we crossed another river, called the Fiumesino: but the most remarkable of the many rivers that cut this road, is the Pisatello or Rubicon, the antient and famous *Rubicon*, which at this day is but a very inconsiderable stream. Cesano our next post is a pretty little town, situated at the foot of a mountain: this place, as also Forli and Faenza, are all mentioned in history. Before we reached Forli, we passed through Ravenna also, where we experienced the truth of what is said concerning the badness of the water, as well as of its scarcity; they boil it, in order to make it wholesome, and it is so thick from the numbers of *animalcula* contained in it, that it is necessary to strain it also; after all this cookery it stinks abominably: the wine is excellent, richer than Cyprus: the people of this place look shockingly ill; they are of a kind of lead colour. When we changed horses, we observed the post-boys had brought water with them,

to

to exchange for an equal quantity of wine, from the former post-house, which was done in our presence. Imola is famous for having produced several celebrated persons and excellent poets, one of whom is now alive and resides there, the ingenious Count Camillo Zampieri. We passed rivers so frequently in our road from Rimini hither, that it grew at last extremely tiresome, otherwise the road is good.

The moment our arrival was known, though past eight o'clock at night, several of our Bologna friends called upon us, and others sent us the most obliging messages; we can never forget, nor fail to acknowledge, the very friendly and kind manner in which we were at all times treated by the Bolognese families in general, and in particular, by our much esteemed friend the Vice-Legate. We find it indispensably necessary to stay here a few days: it would be highly ungrateful not to comply with the pressing instances of those to whom we owe so large a debt of acknowledgment. \* \* \* \* \*

We are extremely well lodged at the *Pellegrino*, where the people of the inn gave us as kind a reception in their way, as if we had conferred an obligation upon them; indeed we always consider it as a duty to recommend to our countrymen, such inns and houses as have lodged and used us well;

well; and I think every traveller ought to be careful to make this distinction, otherwise the insolent and the imposing may fare equally well with the civil and reasonable. Here are letters just arrived from England. \* \* \* \* \* I shall write once more from hence, and am, as ever, &c.

## L E T T E R   XLIX.

Bologna, May the 28th, 1771.

**W**E have never been out of company and amusements since our arrival here, and the weather has contributed to make these few days pass away delightfully. There are several pretty villas and gardens in the environs of this city. We have passed our afternoons most agreeably. One day, after a superb dinner at the Cardinal Legate's, he was so obliging as to conduct us himself, with two other ladies and two gentlemen, to the elegant villa of the ingenious and learned Count Algarotti: you must know it is a very great honour in this country to be invited to accompany a Cardinal Legate in his own coach; it is rarely the portion of his most intimate acquaintance and friends, and this, as it may have probably been the first time it has happened to strangers, I acquaint

quaint you with, lest you should *not* be surpris'd at it. His *cortege* consisted of two fine gilt coaches, drawn by beautiful horses decked with trappings and ribbons: his pages and gentlemen on horseback; his troop of light-horse attended as guards: passing through the town the people all turned out of their houses, and the streets were extremely crowded in order to receive his benediction, which he bestowed upon them by stretching out his hand. However, as even *Legates* themselves are subject to accidents, his eminence's coachman, by way of making a short cut, missed his way, and the coaches very narrowly escaped being overturned in crossing a shallow river. This, as you may suppose, occasioned some loss of time, and not a little vexation to the company. Though we went at a great rate, it was late in the evening when we arrived at the villa, where an elegant supper was preparing, and the house in the nicest order, in case we should chuse to remain there till the next day; but after viewing the villa and its very pretty gardens, upon our expressing a desire to return to Bologna, it was immediately complied with, and we were all set down at the Opera-house, where the audience had waited a considerable time, doubtful if the Cardinal Legate meant to *assist* there or not that evening:

we

we had the honour of sitting in his box, and the instant he appeared, the curtain was drawn up. This opera is truly fine; it is complete in music, both vocal and instrumental; the scenery and decorations beautiful; the *ballets* well performed by two hundred dancers, and admirably adapted to the subject of the opera, which is Orpheus and Eurydice. The morning of that day, above three thousand Jesuits arrived from different places, whence they have been exiled, as Spain, Portugal, France, Parma, the Spanish West-Indies, &c. they are only passing through the town; some going to Rome, others to places where they may with safety conceal themselves, and most of them appear to be in a very wretched and starving condition: we saw them pass through the streets in the morning from our windows, but I was more surprised to find the pit of the opera crowded with them in the evening. We passed another afternoon at the villa belonging to the once famous singer *Farinello*. General Angeleli, a very fine old gentleman, recommended strongly to us to go and see *Farinello* and his villa, assuring us they were both curious and worthy our notice; adding, that this once famous singer is upon so good a footing here, as to be visited by the first families in Bologna. When we came thither, we were surprised to

to find an elegant house built in the taste of an English villa, on what is there generally called an Italian plan : the grounds about the house are laid out in the English stile, (*ferme ornée*) his cattle come up to the door ; his hay harvest is just over, and the haystacks are made up in the corner of one of his fields as with us ; his trees are planted in hedge-rows and clumps, and the neatness and simplicity is such, that I could scarce persuade myself that we were not in England. He received us most politely at the gate, and shewed us into an excellent saloon for music, where we found the Vice-Legate and several of our acquaintance conversing, and from them we learnt, that they frequented this villa, often passed their evenings here, and treated it as belonging to themselves. Signor Carlo (as Farinello\* is called at Bologna) is in person extremely tall and thin, and though considerably advanced in years has a youthful air. The moment we had entered his house, he began to express his obligations to the English nation, for the kind protection and approbation they had bestowed on him when in London : naming several of distinguished rank who flourished in

\* The King of Spain has conferred upon him the dignity of Grandee of Spain.

his day, and who had treated him in the most generous manner, by aiding him with their bounty, and honouring him with their protection: he concluded, after having made the most grateful acknowledgments, with saying, he owed to the *English* that villa and land which he possessed, and the means of enjoying the remainder of his life in plenty, tranquillity, and ease.

Very genteel refreshments of every kind were brought in, and this man appears in his own house as if he was made to serve all those who honour him with their company, and without the least consciousness of his being the owner: he bears an excellent character, and is much esteemed by all the Bolognese; his villa is neatly furnished, but very simple. I observed a picture of an English lady, at full length, in a magnificent frame; she is about the middle size, of a very genteel make, dressed in a pink night-gown, muslin apron, and a chip hat; I could not prevail on him to tell me who it was drawn for. He is also possessed of one of the finest harpsichords, I suppose, in the world; the portrait and this harpsichord are what he most values of all he is master of.

I could expatiate on the environs of this town till I had filled a long letter, but am obliged

obliged to quit the subject abruptly, having just received a most obliging message from the Cardinal Legate to say, that he has commanded the opera to be performed again this evening, in consequence of our intention to quit Bologna to-morrow; and as we approved of it much, he thought it might be agreeable to us to see it again before our departure. This is certainly extremely attentive, and a very great compliment in his eminence, as it was not to have been performed till to-morrow evening. So adieu, for this invitation must be complied with, though I had rather employed the evening in your service. We are determined to go to-morrow; for were we to leave it in the least doubtful, our kind friends would invent some *fête* to detain us still longer. Adieu, I shall write again at the first place we sleep at, on our road to Venice.

I am, &c.

H 2

LETTER

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## LETTER L.

Ferrara, May the 29th.

**W**E left Bologna this morning at ten o'clock, and sleep here to-night. We have come only thirty miles to-day, having stopped at Cento for above two hours (it being but six miles out of our way), in order to see some remarkable paintings, by Guercino, who was born there; his real name was Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, but he was nick-named Guercino, from his having but one eye.

In the Church belonging to the Jesuit's college is a St. Jerome, and the Virgin suckling the infant Jesus; it is a remarkable circumstance in regard to this picture, that Guercino, by his will, ordered his heirs not to permit any person, upon what pretext soever, to take a copy of it. It is certainly good, the *chiaro oscuro* is well preserved, and the Ciceroni who shews it, points out some peculiarities worthy attention: when you walk backward and forward before it, the infant always appears to follow you with his eyes; also the other figures, as well in front as on either side, still appear in a proper point of view, though not in the same. This effect must  
proceed

proceed from his great judgment in the doctrine of vision, and the effects of light and shadow. Also by the same master, an Elisha raising from the dead the son of the Shunamite ; great expression in this piece.

In the church of the Rosary is a St. Jerome, a St. John, and a St. Thomas; the last by Gennaro, Guercino's master. In another church called *Nome di Dio*, is a prodigious fine picture of Jesus Christ's appearance to the blessed Virgin, after his resurrection.

In *il Duomo* is another painting, by Guercino ; the subject, Jesus Christ giving the keys of Paradise to St. Peter. At the church of the Capuchin Monks without the town, is an agreeable picture by the same master, representing the disciples at Emmaus ; and a Madonna, which is a portrait of Guercino's mistress.

The road from Cento is too rough to be commodious ; it lies over the sea-beach, or rather in a shallow sea. The rivers are disagreeable to pass, and the journey by no means pleasant.

Ferrara, where they shewed us some good pictures, is situated on a branch of the Po. In the refectory of the Carthusian church, is a representation of the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, by Bononi ; they assured us, that they have been offer-

ed for it as many pieces of gold as would cover it.

In the church of St. Benedetto is a curious picture, by Bononi; it represents Herod and Herodias, but they are the portraits of Alphonso duke of Ferrara and his mistress; here is also the tomb of Ariosto.

To-morrow morning we set forward for Venice, from whence I shall immediately write, lest you should be idle enough to think a fresh-water journey more dangerous than a land one, and so fancy us at the bottom of the *Po*, which you must know is one of the finest rivers in the world. Good night, &c.

## LETTER LI.

From the *Po*, May 30, 1771.

**W**E quitted Ferrara this morning, proceeded to a small village called Francolino, which is only five miles distant from thence: we embarked at two o'clock on board one of the boats that are kept there, for the purpose of conveyance to Venice, and shall reach that city to-morrow about three o'clock afternoon, at the rate of about eight miles an hour; and as the weather is extremely fine, we mean to pass the night on the *Po*; though there  
are

are no luxurious conveniences for sleeping on board : however, it is so improbable that we should find tolerable accommodation at a wretched inn in any wretched village should we land, that the sleeping on a table in the middle of the boat, with a broad bench on one side, seems preferable to us. We are well protected from the sun, and the river is as smooth as a looking-glass; it appears to be about half a mile broad; the banks are not deep, and the verdure meets the water's edge in a gentle slope: at some distance and on each side are cottages and farm-houses, with fine grazing meadows about them; the country appears well planted and cultivated. Our baggage is all on board with us, and our carriage makes a droll appearance in the boat I assure you: we never travelled so agreeably in our lives; our rowers work hard, keeping time in their strokes. I have had the prudence to lay in the following articles for our voyage; in the first place two or three books for our amusement, my mandoline, and some music books which I have unpacked, a tinder-box and bougies for the night, a cold ham, cold fowls, Parmesan cheese, wine, good water, and a dozen of lemons: the eatables are from Ferrara, which being the residence of a Cardinal, is well supplied with provisions for the table. It is now night,

and the rising moon seems enamoured of her refulgent charms, reflected in the calm bosom of the Po. We have gone about six and thirty miles, and are just entering a canal; here our rowers become useless, as we must be towed by horses through several canals, and we are preparing to go to rest. Our boat-men sleep on their benches by their oars, within a blanket provided for that purpose, our courier along with them. By way of kindness, a thick black woollen curtain has been put up for us, so fastened over and about our wooden ceiling, that I thought just now we should have been smothered with heat; the musquitos, which are like gnats, begin to infest us. Good night, I hope these tormenting creatures will chuse to sleep themselves also.

May the 31st. I have passed but a bad night, through the stings of the musquitos and my own timidity. Notwithstanding my endeavours to secure my face from these tormentors, by covering it all over, save as much of the end of my nose as was necessary for breathing, yet these cunning animals, discovered that vulnerable morsel, and bit me most barbarously; the rest of my face escaped; but they have taken ample revenge of my hands and arms, which are in a miserable condition with most violent itchings, and my skin

is much inflamed: they never molested M——. Notwithstanding their efforts I should have slept on, had it not been that I was suddenly waked by the sound of the oddest groans, accompanied with a kind of sighing and stifled lamentations, as I apprehended. Though extremely afraid, I ventured to look through a crack in the curtain, when to my great terror, I thought I saw a tall man hanging up, much embarrassed in a quantity of clothes: I suppose the wailings I had heard to have proceeded from this person. I wakened M—— in a hurry, and told him my fears; he immediately got up and walked to the end of the boat with a pistol in each hand, where this apparition shewed itself; but judge of my surprise, when it appeared that the groans and lamentations proceeded from the ropes by which we were towed; and the hanging man was nothing but a parcel of weeds which had collected and stuck about them. Drawing nearer to Venice when the sun was risen, we perceived the sides of the canals to be prettily embellished with small pleasure-houses, gardens, and coffee-houses; about eight o'clock the people of one of these latter stepping into our boat brought us coffee, upon which we breakfasted, continuing our voyage at the same time.

Two o'clock. We are now within two miles of Venice; but the wind is risen, and being rather against us, are obliged to take the assistance of another boat, come out to us for that purpose, being no longer towed by the horses. I think my letter would make an admirable supplement to the *Voyageur de St. Cloud tant par mer que par terre*. Venice has appeared before us for three miles past: but now, on our nearer approach, I believe the world cannot produce a more surprising, or more beautiful view; a city rising out of the bottom of the waves, crowned with glittering spires. This sea we are now upon is called the *Lagunes*, because of its calm property, being in a manner like a lake of sea-water; it is shallow, and not subject to agitation by storms. Adieu for the present, having just gained the great canal of Venice.

Venice. We are lodged in a large palace, now converted into an *hotel* for strangers; it is called the *Palazzo Contarini*. We have the same apartment our acquaintance lord L— lately occupied; it is much too large, but there is not a smaller that is commodious; judge of the size, when our anti-chamber, or outer saloon, is an hundred and twenty feet long, and wide in proportion; our sitting room within is a cube of forty; our bed-chamber and dressing-rooms exceedingly good and convenient;

nient; the saloon is stuccoed, but the rest of the apartments richly furnished, and hung with crimson damask. The saloon opens into a large balcony, from which is a beautiful view of the *Rialto* and the grand canal, to appearance about a quarter of a mile broad, bordered with several fine palaces and well built houses; some of which are painted in fresco on the outside. The canal is covered with gondolas, these, though black, have not so dismal an effect as you would imagine. This hotel is kept by a Frenchman, who is married to a Venetian woman; they appear to be good sort of people, and I think very reasonable in their demands: we are to give them twenty paols a day for our lodging, dinner, and supper, not including breakfast or wine. Our gondola is to cost us eight paols *per* day. I shall send this letter directly to the post, as I am sure you cannot be too soon informed of our having made a happy voyage. I am as ever, on land or on water, &c.

LETTER

## L E T T E R LII.

Venice, June the 6th, 1771.

I Have just received three letters from  
you \* \* \* \* \*

I thank you for the news, and I assure you  
the English papers, which are sent here,  
have furnished us with a great deal of  
amusement: these contain some extraor-  
dinary anecdotes respecting some well-  
known persons, which I shall mention, as  
perhaps you may not yet have heard them.

\* \* \* \* \* Although it  
is carnival almost the year round at Ve-  
nice, it is not so just now, which I cannot  
in the least regret; for though I think a  
masqued ball a very elegant amusement in  
France and Italy, yet to be obliged to go  
about every where in masquerade, must  
be extremely disagreeable, and subject to  
many inconveniences, which is the case  
here in carnival time.

The English envoy Sir J— W— is not  
here at present, nor the French either; the  
consul of the latter nation, Monsieur le  
Blonde de la Motte, supplies his place.  
Mr. Udney the British consul is here, and  
his very genteel manners make him ex-  
tremely agreeable to English travellers: he  
lives

lives well with the Venetians, has an admirable taste in pictures, and possesses himself no inconsiderable collection. There is no conveyance in this town but by water; out of the door of your lodging, you step into your gondola instead of your coach; the motion of them is extremely agreeable; two gondoliers manage it so dexterously, that they will whip round a sharp corner of these watery streets with more agility, than the best coachman in London can take a short turn there. He that governs the helm, stands in the most graceful attitude imaginable. The first orders we gave to our gondoliers, were to conduct us to the *Place St. Mark*, which is the only spot one can call *terra firma* in this city. We were soon there, and found it answer all its descriptions. This is the center of Venetian amusement; here you see every body; hear all the news of the day, and every point discussed: here are the senators, nobles, merchants, fine ladies, and the meanest of the people: Jews, Turks, Puppets, Greeks, mountebanks, all sorts of jugglers and fights. Although such a heterogeneous mixture of people throng this place during the day, and often pass great part of the night here, yet there is no riot or disturbance: the Venetians are so accustomed to see strangers, as not to be the least surprised at their  
 their

their being dressed in a fashion different to themselves; nor inclined to esteem them objects of ridicule on account of their not speaking the Venetian language: in short, from the moment you enter the Place St. Mark, the advantage a free government has over a despotic is obvious in the easy and liberal manners of the people; the same air extends to their faces, and it is rare to meet any body at Venice with a dark suspicious countenance. Here are arcades or *piazzas*, extremely convenient for shelter from the sun, wind, or rain; under some of them are coffee-houses and shops: in the former, the women enter as freely as the men, make their parties, are served with all kinds of refreshments, and converse with as much ease as if they were in their own houses. The two columns of granite, which terminate this Place St. Mark on the side of the sea, were brought hither from Greece, and give the entrance a noble air.

The Portico or piazza which is under the palace of St. Mark, is called the *Broglio*, and is destined to the noble Venetians, who repair to this walk in the morning to converse at their ease about the business of the state; the people and others are careful not to mix with them on those occasions, nor even by walking too near the *Broglio* hazard the interrupting them.  
There

There is an universal politeness here in every rank; the people expect a civil deportment from their nobles towards them, and they return it with much respect and veneration; but should a *noble* assume an insolent arrogant manner towards his inferior, it would not be borne with. I was at first surpris'd at the quick transition, from the frothy compliments which fall from the servile mouths of those who champ the bit of a despotic government, and the style of a compliment here; the highest expression in this way at Venice being *Gentil Donna*, which signifies *honest woman*, or woman of honour, which I think has much the same sense; and upon entering a shop, the tradesman addressing me to know what I would have, called me *cara Ella*: when at Rome or Naples, such a man would have styled me *Eccellenza*, *Illustrissima*. I own I feel myself infinitely more obliged to a Venetian, who styles me and believes me to be a *gentil donna*, than to a slave lavishing all the titles he can invent to flatter me. But to return to a description of the *Place St. Mark*. The Ducal Church dedicated to St. Mark, is in the old absurd Gothic style of architecture; before you enter, the four bronze horses (antique) are worthy observation; they have been covered with plates of gold; are the supposed workmanship of  
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the celebrated Lyfippus ; are recorded to have stood over that of Augustus, and from thence to have been removed and placed over the triumphal arches of other Emperors, till at last Constantine had them conveyed with him to Constantinople, from whence they were taken by the Venetians in the year 1206, after the conquest of that capital.

The lion, the symbol of the saint, and the arms of the republic is so much in repute here, that you find him multiplied, from his first appearance on the top of one of the Greek antique columns, to the extremity of the square, wherever room could be found for him. The body is like a lion, but the head and face human, with a stern and forbidding countenance; so that it is become a common saying here, when speaking of a very ugly person, *Brutto figure come il lione di San Marco*. The interior of the church is highly ornamented with fine antique marble, mosaics, &c. brought from Greece. The decorations over the altar are of solid gold, sculpted in *basso relievo* ; the figures in sort of shrines, enriched with rubies, emeralds, and pearls. Behind this altar is another where the *hostie* is kept ; it is surrounded with beautiful pillars, four of which are of oriental alabaster of an extraordinary beauty, and two others of serpentine stone. The bronze

bronze door of the sanctuary, is by Sanfovino. The ducal chapel is richly adorned with the most precious marbles. This church contains a *miraculous* picture of the Blessed Virgin, by St. Luke: this is the most famous of all the pictures done by that holy evangelist: they assured us, that the emperors of Constantinople carried it with them in all their military expeditions, verily believing it the work of that saint; and that it was in the year 1204, when the Venetians and French took Constantinople, that the Doge Henry Dandolo caused it to be transported to Venice.

The treasury contains many articles of great value, but I do not believe equal to what it was estimated at in former days; there are a numerous collection of relics; which are in this age much fallen in their value. Amongst the curiosities, they assert themselves possessed of a manuscript of the gospel of St. Mark, written with his own hand: and amongst the rich and precious articles, here are several candlesticks and vases of pure gold. Twelve rock rubies, which weigh seven ounces each; presented by an Emperor to the Republic, in the year 1343. A very large pearl. A sapphire which weighs nine ounces. A dish of an entire and perfect turquoise six inches diameter; four rabbits

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are engraved upon it, and some Arabick characters: here are several other valuable and curious gems. In the pavement of the portico of St. Mark is a small morsel of porphyry, frequently kissed by the people, who hold it in the highest veneration: on this piece of marble the Emperor Barbarossa prostrated himself at the Pope's feet (Alexander the Third,) in 1177, when his holiness gave him absolution. This story is represented in the grand saloon of the Ducal Palace, where the Pope is seen treading on the back of this Emperor; there is a tedious and foolish piece of history belonging to it, which I shall spare myself and you. The Ducal Palace where the Doge lives, is a vast Gothic pile; one front in the *Place St. Mark*; another looks upon the land; the principal door of entrance (for there are eight) is on the side of the square, or *Place St. Mark*; by this you enter a large court, where are placed several antique statues, the most remarkable, a *Cicero* and *Marcus Aurelius*. After having ascended the staircase, called that of the giants, you come to a corridore, where are the famous mouths (*Denunzie Segrette*) for receiving letters relative to the state. This corridore conducts to an anti-chamber, the ceiling of which is painted by *Tintoretto*; the subject Justice presenting a sword to the *Doge Priuli*.

On

On the walls are paintings in compartments, some by *Paolo Veronese*; the best are the following subjects, Our Saviour on the mount of olives, by P. Veronese. St. John the Evangelist, by *Francisco Bassano*; the Angel waking the Shepherds, also of Bassano. In the *Sala delle quatre porte*, all the paintings are so much injured as to be scarcely worth noticing. In the room called *Anti Collegio*, the ceiling is painted by P. Veronese, where is an allegorical representation of Venice, &c. The Rape of Europa, one of the pictures which adorn this *sala*, is esteemed the *chef d'œuvre* of *Paolo*: this piece represents three different parts of the fable; the colouring is rich and glowing; the stuffs, of which the drapery is formed, of that peculiarity and beauty that *Paolo* is so remarkable for. The bull is of the finest and most noble species of that animal, his countenance expresses great tenderness; the most striking beauty in Europa is her naked foot, which is of the most elegant shape and delicacy of flesh. A picture by *Gi-acopo Bassano*, representing a pastoral scene; it is finely done. The *Real sala del collegio* is adorned with paintings, some of which relate to the Venetian history, others are scripture subjects: but I will not attempt to enter into the detail of any pictures, but such as appear to me particularly remarkable;

ble, either for their great merit, or singularity; as I think you have already been sufficiently obeyed on the article of pictures from other places in Italy, and I fear tiring you with catalogues. All the apartments, which consist of council chambers, courts of justice, &c. very large and convenient, are adorned with historical paintings, chiefly in fresco, by no means in good preservation; they have been much spoiled by the clouds of powder that fly out of the lawyer's perukes when pleading, at which time they use a vast deal of action and agitation. However they are curious, and worthy the examination of a traveller; as a knowledge of the most interesting part of the Venetian story may be more agreeably collected from them, than by reading the history of Venice. I shall not attempt to describe the prisons of this palace; we have not seen them, but by what I hear am convinced the writers of travels have made a true report of them when they assert, that between the rafters, and immediately under the covering of the palace, is a hollow place sufficiently large to confine unhappy wretches, but too low to admit of their standing upright; that their suffering must be dreadful from the burning heat of the sun, till death puts an end to their misery; as the covering consists chiefly of copper,

and

and in some places of lead : and this dismal sentence had effect not long since, upon a young man of the *Mocenigo* family, who (I think) was charged with no other offence than that of an intended misalliance; his family concurred in the infliction of this punishment. The Place St. Mark is particularly agreeable to walk in by night; the lights in the coffee-houses illuminating the piazza render it extremely cheerful: a concourse of people resorting here to breathe the cool evening air, is so considerable as to fill the whole square. The little streets leading from this Place, are well furnished with elegant shops, which make the most brilliant appearance, from the curious arrangement of their articles; and strike me, as far exceeding the *coup d'œil* of the *foire St. Germain* at Paris. The street of the silver-smiths makes a splendid show, there being no other sort of shops in it. That of the milliners and mercers is like a *parterre* of flowers, the goods, of the most glowing colours, being ingeniously mixed in such a manner in the windows, as to produce a striking effect. Other streets consist solely of poulterers, and some of green-grocers shops for all kinds of garden stuff: these last are dressed in such a manner, as discovers a surprising taste in the common people; a perfect neatness reigns throughout,

out, and I observed that ideas drawn from architecture were the favourite fancies of the gardeners, who pile up cabbages, lettuces, &c. as columns, and form their capitals, friezes, &c. of turnips, carrots, and cellery; the flowers and herbs are linked together, and disposed in festoons after the *antique*. The confectioners and pastrycooks shops are also curiously contrived. I should not trouble you with this detail, but that the appearances are so strikingly odd and singular, that I thought it worth mentioning. The provisions here are tolerable, but the Venetians are wretched cooks: they told me, that almost all the meat comes from Dalmatia; it is coarse and lean; their poultry is good, as is the fish; the scuttle-fish disgusts at first sight, for when dressed it fills the dish with a black juice like ink, but tastes agreeably when you have conquered your prejudice to its colour. They have an odious custom here, of using the blood of animals in their soups and ragouts; not liking the soup they served up yesterday, I desired our host to have it made better to-day; when it came upon the table I thought it of an old colour, and the taste was extremely disagreeable; upon inquiry I was told, it was made after the Venetian manner, and particularly delicate and elegant, even *eccellentissimo*, there being a  
greater

greater quantity than ordinary of fowls and pigeons blood in it: guess if I had any further appetite for Venetian soup.—We do not propose making any long stay here. As soon as our curiosity is gratified we depart, but our day is not yet fixed. Adieu.

I am, as ever yours, &c.

## L E T T E R LII.

Venice, the 14th of July.

**T**HE very day after I wrote last I was attacked by an indisposition, occasioned by the water we drink having a brackish taste, which I did not perceive for some time, having always mixed it with wine. The common English remedies had not the desired effect, I believe I should have been extremely ill, (and would not hear of a Venetian physician) had not M— mentioned my disorder to Mr. U— who was not at all surprised at it, the water of Venice having frequently a like effect upon strangers: he advised my drinking a mineral water of *Nocera*; I took his prescription, the first glass relieved me much, and half the bottle completed the cure. This water is extremely clear  
and

and light, and has no taste. My indisposition occasioned me some disappointments. I could not comply with the obliging invitations we received to two wedding balls and suppers; one was the marriage of the Doge's son *Alvise Mocenigo, e la nobil Donna Polissena Contarini*; the other was of *Alessandro Barziza, e Andriana Berlanda Berlendis*: though I could not partake of the amusements in the evenings, I thought I might possibly venture to see the ceremony in the church; we were accordingly present at the first of these, that of *Mocenigo*. I was extremely well pleased that I had not permitted so fine a show to escape me, though afflicted with a tormenting pain in my stomach the whole time. The procession of the gondolas to the church was very fine; the gondoliers, dressed in gold and silver stuffs, made a most brilliant contrast with the blackness of their boats. We got into the church before the bride and bridegroom with their *suite* arrived, where the pillars and walls were covered with crimson damask, fringed with gold; the altar richly adorned with lace and flowers, and the steps up to it spread over with Persian carpets; the whole church was illuminated with large wax tapers, though at noon-day.

As soon as the company were disembarked from their gondolas, they formed themselves

themselves into a regular procession ; the ladies walked two and two : they were all dressed in thin black silk gowns (excepting the bride), with large hoops ; the gowns are strait-bodied, with very long trains, like the *robes de cour* at Versailles ; their trains tucked up on one side of the hoop, with a prodigious large tassel of diamonds. Their sleeves were covered up to the shoulders with falls of the finest Brussels lace, a drawn tucker of the same round the bosom, adorned with rows of the finest pearl, each as large as a moderate gooseberry, till the rows descended below the top of the stomacher ; then two ropes of pearl, which came from the back of the neck, were caught up at the left side of the stomacher, and finished in two fine tassels. Their heads were dressed prodigiously high in a vast number of buckles, and two long drop curls on the neck. A great number of diamond pins and strings of pearl adorned their heads, with large *sultanes* or feathers on one side, and magnificent diamond ear-rings.

The bride was dressed in cloth of silver, made in the same fashion and decorated in the same manner with the other ladies ; but her bosom was quite bare, and she had a fine diamond necklace and an enormous *bouquet* of natural flowers. Her hair was dressed as high as the others, with this

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difference, that it was in curls behind as well as before; and had three curls which fell down her back from her poll, the two side ones reaching half way down her back, and the middle curl not quite so far: these three curls had a singular appearance, but not near so good an effect as the heads of the other ladies, whose hair was plaited in large folds, and appeared much more graceful: her diamonds were very fine, and in great profusion. She is but seventeen years old; is of a comely sort of beauty, and very full grown of her age. All the ladies that walked, about sixty in number, were relations or intimate friends to the young couple; many of them extremely handsome. The men appeared to me to be all alike; they were dressed in black gowns like lawyers, with immense periwigs. The bridegroom is a slender fair little man, seemed to be much charmed with his new wife; he very politely sent us the *epithalamiums* and other poems made on the occasion, elegantly covered and adorned with engravings. I was extremely sorry at not being well enough to go to the ball and supper; however I persuaded M— to comply with their very polite invitation: he danced English country-dances, but did not stay to supper. I was not well enough to go to the other wedding; but he went, and

and it passed much in the same manner with the first. Is it not singular, that the Doge's dignity should forbid his being present at his own son's wedding? I have employed my mornings, since my recovery, in seeing a few of the most remarkable churches and palaces, which are here so numerous, that I thought it adviseable to make a selection of those most worthy of notice: so, during my confinement, I made out a list of such as contained the best pictures, &c. To begin with the churches: St. Zaccaria is a church belonging to a convent of noble ladies of the Benedictine order; it is fronted with marble. The best picture this church possesses is by P. Veronese; it represents the Virgin, the infant Jesus, St. John, St. Joseph, St. Catharine, St. Jerome, and St. Francis; St. John is upon a pedestal, and St. Francis is shewing him his *Stigmata*: the colouring is beautiful, the figures all expressive of the characters, the Virgin extremely handsome, and St. Catherine, whose profile only appears, is of a most amiable countenance; her hair is finely done, is braided with pearls, and in the picture Veronese had a good opportunity of displaying his powers of representing rich and ornamental drapery. The grand altar is finely decorated with porphyry, and other precious marbles.

*St. Fantino* is worth seeing for its fine ornaments in marble and opaque gems; here are also two good pictures, by Palma.

*Scuola di St. Fantino* is the *confraternata* of St. Jerome. These brethren visit the condemned criminals, and exhort them to repentance, &c. in their dying moments. The church belonging to this convent is highly ornamented (but is not the same with the above mentioned); the ceiling is painted by Palma, and is amongst his best performances; the subject an Assumption, with the Apostles and St. Jerome. Here are introduced the portraits of Tiziano and Vittorio (a statuary), Palma, his wife, and several celebrated musicians, friends of his. The whole history of St. Jerome is painted on the walls.

St. Lucca; this church is situated in the center of Venice; over the grand altar is a fine picture by P. Veronese; it represents St. Luke, who, having drawn the portrait of the Virgin which is placed in the corner of the picture, is admiring it, leaning on his ox; behind him stands a priest: this is a very fine picture. Over another altar is a picture by Benefatto, a nephew of Veronese; the subject, a Last Supper: in this piece appears a man with a large beard, which is the portrait of Aretino, who lies buried under the pulpit. St.

St. Salvadoro is famous for its architecture, from the designs of Julio Lombardi, and for two or three good paintings by Tiziano.

*I Miracoli*, a church belonging to the female convent of Clarists, is encrusted within and without with fine marbles, serpentine stone and porphyry. Over the organ are two statues of children in marble; they are antique, of the last beauty, and attributed to Praxiteles, the celebrated Athenian sculptor. Near the church is the house Tiziano lived in; he is esteemed with justice the first painter of the Venetian school: he drew the picture of Charles the Fifth three times, and was so highly favoured by this monarch, as to be created a *Count Palatino*; this celebrated artist is interred in the church of I Frari (where are some good paintings of P. Veronese); he died of the plague in 1576, aged ninety-nine years.

St. Giorgio Maggiore is a church belonging to the Benedictins; Palladio was its architect; the front is entirely marble: in my opinion, this is the finest church in Venice; I say in my opinion, as its architecture has been criticised by good judges. The refectory belonging to it contains the famous picture by P. Veronese, which represents the Marriage Supper at Cana in Galilee. I was not permitted by the monks

to enter their refectory, *as no women are suffered to penetrate so far*: I therefore waited for M— in the church; he made a note of it: he thinks it a very fine picture, and believes there are more portraits amongst the personages, than the monks apprehend: amongst the musicians they point out those of Tiziano, Tintoretto, and Bassano; he thinks the colouring, ordonnance, grouping, &c. in Veronese's best manner. As a proof of the great difference between the prices now paid for pictures, and what they sold for at the time this was done, it appears by an entry in the convent household-book, which M— saw, that P. Veronese was paid for this picture the sum of twenty-two sequins, six measures of wheat, and two vessels of wine: I wonder how Sir J— R— would look, if he was offered for one of his best family pictures ten guineas, an hundred of cheese, and a hog-head of strong beer!——

I have but two more churches to mention. St. Sebastiano contains several pictures by Veronese; here is also his tomb. The sanctuary is furnished with a very good picture of his, which represents St. Marco and St. Marcellino, who are descending the staircase of the Prætor, supposed to have just quitted him after he had condemned them to die: their mother appears earnest with them to renounce  
their

their faith, and save their lives; but St. Sebastian exhorts them to be steady in their resolutions: it is a very interesting picture, the colouring fresh, and in high conservation. Here are a great collection of excellent paintings: the martyrdom of St. Sebastian, and several circumstances of his life, with some scripture history, are all worthy the attention of the curious.

In the church of St. Maria Maggiore are some remarkable paintings. One by Bassano is a most entertaining scene; the subject, Noah's ark: it is incredible what a number of strange animals he has introduced, how highly he has finished the plumage of an amazing variety of birds, and the accuracy with which he has drawn the various beasts, &c. The Four Seasons in the *naïf* of this church are by the same painter, and well done. I shall now mention some of the palaces, for I think I have introduced you to as many churches as are necessary to give you an idea of the rest, but be assured I have not named a fourth of the number this city contains. We had a great desire to see the *Palazzo Pisani* on account of one famous picture by Veronese, representing the family of Darius prostrate before Alexander; but were much disappointed at hearing it had been sold: this was the boast of the palace, the remainder I think but indifferent.

Palazzo Barberigo. This Palace contains several excellent paintings by Tiziano: amongst the most remarkable are the following: a woman and a satyr; a Prometheus; Tobias and the Angel, a singular representation; a Venus at her toilette, she is extremely handsome, and appears to be a portrait; a Cupid brings her a crown, and another holds the mirror. Venus dissuading Adonis from the chase. A Virgin and infant Jesus, to whom the Magdalen presents a box of perfumes; this is a very fine picture. A weeping Magdalen, full of the most pathetic expression. The miracle of the five loaves by Bassano; a winter scene by the same master.

Palazzo Grassi contains a fine collection of pictures. Here is a Venus by Tiziano; she strongly resembles that at Florence, and is supposed to be the portrait of a mistress of a duke of Ferrara. A rape of Europa by Veronese, an admirable picture; Actæon and Diana by the same. A very singular picture; its subject the parable of the beam and the moat, *particularised* by Feti. Some portraits by Vandyke. The anointing our Saviour's feet at the table of the Pharisee, by Rubens. A Cupid by Guido. David bearing the head of Goliath. The Israelites rejoicing precede him, by Guercino. The triumph of Galathea by Schiavone; the women are elegantly cast. The

The palaces at Venice are much in the same taste; having seen one or two, you have in a manner seen all. The Venetians cover their walls with pictures, and never think their apartments properly furnished, until they have such as shall fill all the spaces from the top to the bottom, so as completely to hide the hanging. This being their object, there are in all the collections many more bad pictures than good; and on entering a room, the number of paintings are such, that it is not till after some recollection you can discriminate those pictures that merit attention, from amongst a chaos of glowing colours that surround them; and which are frequently so ill classed, that a picture which requires to be hung high, is perhaps the lowest in the room, whilst another that cannot be seen too close, touches the cornice: this is occasioned by their great object of covering the walls, never considering what light, &c. may suit their pictures.

The palaces in general are furnished with velvet and damask, fringed or laced with gold. The floors are of a composition which imitates various marbles, and has an excellent effect; but what I admire very much, and is universally found in all the houses as well as palaces, is the elegant manner in which they paint the doors, architraves, skirting boards, and all their wainscoting: it is smooth as ivory, of very

pale tints for the ground, and prettily ornamented with various devices, festoons, fruits, &c. They also paint in fresco on the walls with a great deal of facility and taste, having an exceeding good idea of perspective; this is to be met with in the poorest houses, and where they do not go to the expence of painting their walls, their white-wash is of an uncommon neatness; it is glossy, of a soft colour, and never comes off. I shall write again before we leave this city, and must break off now, the time being come for our engagements to two Cassinos this evening. Adieu, &c.

P. S. I live almost the whole of the day when at home in the balcony, which is to me the most agreeable part of this great hotel, I should say *Palazzo*. The people are so musical here, that all day long the houses send forth the most melodious sounds, which die off charmingly along the water; till they again awake the strings, and at the same time draw off my attention so much from what I am about, that I believe were I to reside here for any time, I should do nothing but listen to music the whole day.

LETTER

## L E T T E R LIII.

Venice, June the 17<sup>th</sup>, 1771.

**T**O-morrow we leave this city, and proceed on our route to Milan. I shall write from every place we stop at as usual, and send my letter by the first opportunity, if any offers before we reach that city.

The *Cassinos* I mentioned to you in my last letter, are small houses of one or two rooms on a floor; neatly fitted up, but never fine: those I saw were prepared with India paper, and furnished with chintz. It is the fashion here for every person of distinction to have one Cassino at least, and very frequently more: they have little pleasure in inhabiting their palaces, which are really uncomfortable, and by the plans and dimensions rendered extremely melancholy. A silent and solitary magnificence reigns throughout, interrupted only by the hoarse washing of the sea against the walls, which is not exhilarating to the spirits, you must confess. I suppose it was in search of cheerfulness, recreation and society, that *Cassinos* were originally resorted to; the greater number of them are situated behind St. Mark's Place. Here  
small

small *Coteries* meet, play at cards, generally sup together on some trifle they procure from the pastrycooks-shops and coffee-houses; and often pass the night in conversation, music, or in walking about the *Place St. Mark*. I do not pretend to say these *Cassinos* are not often made an ill use of:—all I can assert is, that in those to which I was introduced, I neither saw nor heard any thing but what was extremely well bred and liberal; the smallness of the rooms, and the card-parties, prevent the formality of a circle. The society was composed of people who seemed perfectly well acquainted with each other, and who shewed us the kindest attention as strangers. To us indeed these *Cassino* parties were not very amusing, as we could not possibly find in them the pleasures the Venetians seemed to do; we had much rather have been at an opera, or a play; but there is no theatre open at this season of the year. The only amusements at this time are these private parties, walking in *la Place St. Mark*, taking the air in our gondola amongst the little islands near Venice, or walking in the *Giardini Giudecca*, as they are called, near Venice; which are extremely ill laid out, in dirty walks and vulgar arbours; the garden itself is divided into quarters, and contains little else than common kitchen garden stuff. Here  
the

the senators and people resort ; and are served with refreshments in the harbours : there is no distinction shewn to one more than another, by those who attend upon the company, yet we never could learn that any accident happened from this mixture of people and ranks. M— has been to see the Arsenal and the *Bucentaure* : as to the first, he says, it agrees with the description the writers of travels have given of it, but does not think it contains any thing that might compensate to me for the trouble of visiting it this hot weather. He thinks the *Bucentaure*\* the ugliest, most tawdry, worst contrived vessel he ever saw ; loaded with ornaments and gilding, and totally void of grace.

We have seen some of the Charitable Institutions, or convents here ; one is called *la Pieta*, it is an hospital for foundlings of the female sex : all I shall say at present concerning this convent is, that I was in, and all over it, and that I saw nothing curious : that we were present in the church, when there was some very good music, both vocal and instrumental, performed in a tribune, by the women of the convent : that the tribune having a lattice before it, we could not distinguish the performers ; I therefore begged to be permitted to go into the tribune, that I might see as well as

\* The state vessel in which the Doge performs the annual ceremony of marrying the Adriatic.

as hear the concert ; my request was granted ; but when I entered I was seized with so violent a fit of laughter, that I am surprised they had not driven me out again. You cannot wonder that my risibility was excited, when, upon entering the tribune, my eyes were struck with the sight of a dozen or fourteen beldams ugly and old ; one blowing a French-horn, another sweating at the bass-viol, another playing first fiddle, and beating time with her foot in the greatest rage ; others performing on bassoons, hautboys, and clarionets ; these, with several young girls who formed the choir, and one who played upon the organ, composed the concert, a concert I never can forget ; but after I had seen it, I could no longer bear to hear it, so much had the sight of the performers disgusted me. As to other anecdotes relating to this convent, I shall reserve them for you when we meet.

*I Mendicanti* is an hospital destined for the relief of indigent girls, and decayed old age. From what I have seen of these charitable institutions, I think they admit of great improvements and better regulations.

The Glass-houses are for the most part built in the islands near the city. We went to see the best manufacture of this kind, but think it falls infinitely short of our English fine cut glass. The only thing I  
saw

saw that appeared singular or curious, was certain festoons of flowers intended to decorate lustres, and large *bouquets* for *saints* in churches; the effect of these flowers when finished is not very pretty, they have a fragile and tawdry appearance. It is an universal custom at Venice, to dress up wooden figures, as large as life, of *madonnas* and saints, &c. and to clothe them in various modes; their faces and hands are painted, to imitate nature; but they have the appearance of gigantic dolls, and are quite sufficient to make one start when placed in a darkish corner. At the above-mentioned manufactory, they shewed us complete furniture for a room in the Grand Signior's seraglio, which had been bespoke at Venice, and made exactly to the orders received from the Porte. The most remarkable article was the principal sofa; it was not raised above four inches from the ground, the back and arms carved and gilt, its carving forming curves and scrolls, and the back rising to the height of about eight feet. In the moulding were inserted or inlaid, broad pieces of thick blue glass (not cut), and here and there small oval and round looking glasses, so placed as to reflect with variety every contiguous object. It was covered with fine Lyons gold silk, and was to have three or four mattresses of the same. Though in description

cription this sofa may not strike you as pretty, yet the effect was really so and very odd; as the sculpted wood, which formed and guided the plan of the whole, was elegantly executed, and designed in a good taste. The rest of the furniture consisted of very broad and low stools, the frames and feet of which were decorated with gilding and pieces of blue glass. There were lustres and festoons of flowers, &c. to ornament the same room.

I think I have not yet mentioned the manners of the Venetians, at least not entered into any detail on that subject, nor will my time now allow me, were I much better qualified for the task than I really am. However, not wholly to disappoint you, take this account of some of their women at least, particularly the nobility. The custom of *Cavalieri Serventi* prevails universally here: this usage would appear in a proper light, and take off a great part of the odium thrown upon the Italians, if the *Cavalieri Serventi* were called husbands; for the real husband or beloved friend, of a Venetian lady (often for life), is the *Cicisbeo*. The husband married in church is the choice of her friends, not by any means of the lady. It is from such absurd tyranny of the relations and friends of young girls, not suffering them to chuse for themselves,

selves, that this chusing of Cicisbeos, or Cavalieri Serventis, has taken its rise, and will never be relinquished in Italy, whilst the same incongruous combinations, subsist: this surely lessens the criminality, at least in some degree. The Venetian ladies have a gay manner of dressing their heads, which becomes them extremely when young, but appears very absurd when age has furrowed over their fine skins, and brought them almost to the ground. I felt a shock at first sight of a tottering old pair I saw enter a coffee-house the other evening; they were both shaking with the palsy, leant upon each other, and supported themselves by a crutch-stick; they were bent almost double by the weight of years and infirmities, yet the lady's head was dressed with great care; a little rose-coloured hat, nicely trimmed with blond, was stuck just above her right ear, and over her left was a small matt of artificial flowers; her few grey hairs behind were tied with ribbon, but so thinly scattered over her forehead, that large patches of her shrivelled skin appeared between the parting curls: the *Cavaliere* was not dressed in the same stile, all his elegance consisted in an abundance of wig which flowed upon his shoulders. I inquired who this *venerable* couple were, and learnt, that the gentleman had been the

the faithful *Cavaliere* of the same lady above forty years ; that they had regularly frequented the *Place St. Mark* and the coffee-houses, and with the most steady constancy had loved each other, till age and disease were conducting them hand in hand together to the grave. However, a forty years constancy is far from *universal* at Venice; *coquettes* are to be found there, as well as elsewhere : I have seen some instances of coquetry at fourscore ; a *Donna Nobile*, whom a catarrh and Satan had bound, “ lo, these eighteen years ! ” was sustaining herself on the arm of a brisk *Cicisbeo* about twenty-five, in the *Place St. Mark* ; she had often changed *Cavalieres*, as you may suppose. Several instances of the most fatal effects from jealousy are to be found in the annals of modern Venetian gallantry ; but such anecdotes, with some of a less tragical kind, I shall communicate to you when we meet, as it would consume too much time to narrate them with my pen. A new regulation in the coffee-houses had just taken place before our arrival : the partitions, which formed kind of cells in the interior of them, into which two or three people might retire and fasten the door, are now taken away, and the rooms quite open and public. At first the senate had determined to exclude the women entirely from entering

tering the coffee-houses, but they remonstrated so violently and effectually against this measure, that they were allowed the liberty of appearing publicly, but absolutely forbid to retire in private into any room, and the little rooms were without exception ordered to be thrown into the large ones. Another law has just been promulgated, which is, that if any *fille de joie* is found walking the streets about the *Place St. Mark*, &c. for the first offence she is to have her head completely shaved, and suffer imprisonment for a time specified; and for the second offence, her eyebrows are also to be shaved, she is to be branded between the eyes, and banished the Republic. The singularity of the situation of this town, I believe, will account for its tiring strangers sooner than most others; I fancy myself a prisoner, from being surrounded with water, at the same time nothing can be more convenient and easy than the gondolas. I shall quit Venice with less regret, than I have hitherto done any other residence in Italy.

Adieu, you shall hear from me again as soon as possible. I am as ever, &c.

P. S. I forgot to mention to you, that the celebrated Rialto does not answer the idea I had formed of it. The arch is indeed large, but wants a certain dignity that  
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should accompany architecture of a bold style; it does not strike one with awe, there is no greatness in the appearance. The Bridge has paltry sheds built on each side of it; these are shops, and their merchandise is brilliant and costly, for they sell nothing but pearls and gold ornaments.

## L E T T E R L I V.

Padua, the 19th of June.

**W**E arrived here last night, and find Padua an old, straggling, ugly town, though founded by Antenor, and celebrated by classic authors; it is but twenty-five miles from Venice. We embarked at Venice in a boat called a *burchio*, in which is a pretty room glazed, painted, and extremely convenient. Four rowers conveyed us from Venice to the canal, formed by the *Brenta*, when two horses towed us along. Before you gain the *Brenta*, your route is indicated by piquets fixed at certain distances in the water, that you may not lose your way through the Lagune; and the first *terra firma* you come to is called Fusina, five miles from Venice. From that city to Padua the views are delightful; for the first five miles, Venice also gives you a variety of appearances: the islands  
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of the Lagunes are fertile, and under a plentiful cultivation. While we were towed along the Brenta, the banks presented us, on each side, with gardens planted down to the water's edge, crowned with palaces and beautiful villas. One of the most elegant of the former is that of Foscarini; another that of Pisani, twenty miles from Venice, and five from Padua: the gardens belonging to this last are very large, and laid out in the taste of those of Marli near Paris. We passed by several villages after having entered the Brenta: the name of the first is *Mira*, in which are several good houses: the next *Doglio*; the third *Stra*; the fourth *Noventa*, but two miles from Padua.

Lalande asserts the fortifications of this town to be in good repair; and says so much of them, that M— had the curiosity to go round and visit them; but found them all in ruins. *Lalande* most certainly never saw them, but took his account from some old description of them, as all he says in regard to Padua, (the historical part excepted) is entirely false. I think, in a well governed state, there should be a severe punishment inflicted upon travellers, who do not make truth their guide: the least inconvenience attendant on so base a conduct, is the giving a great deal of unnecessary trouble and disappointment

to

to those who credit their representations. In the Cathedral church of this City is a Virgin, painted by the famous *Giotto*, *Petrarque* once possessed this picture, and bequeathed it to *Francesco di Carrara*. The Sacristy holds a collection of curious pictures; that of the Virgin and Infant, announced to be of *Tiziano*, is fine; but as the Virgin is not in the same style with most of those painted by that master, it has been conjectured *Pardenone* drew the Virgin, and Titian the Child, Here is an excellent portrait of *Petrarque*, placed amongst the other canons of the cathedral. The library is worth seeing, as it contains some curious manuscripts.

The Church of *St. Antonio* is an old Gothic building. Here are some *basso relievos* by *Donatello* in bronze, tolerably good: In one of the chapels is a decollation of St. John, by *Piazzetto*; this is a very fine picture, but the subject, with the circumstances here depicted, is shocking to contemplate. A Martyrdom of *St. Bartolomi*, by *Tiepoletto*. Also the martyrdom of *St. Agatha*; an executioner cutting off her breasts by the same painter: horrible objects of notice.

*St. Antonio's* chapel is much adorned with marble statues, *basso relievos*, pillars, &c. In the interior are nine pieces of sculpture in *basso relievo*, with figures nearly

ly as large as life, representing the most remarkable events of the saint's life; which, though but indifferently executed, afford amusement from the oddity of the adventures they represent. In the first compartment appears St. Antonio, who is so desirous of the glory of martyrdom, as to quit his canonical habits, to become a member of the poorest order of monks; this is by one *Minello di Bardi*. In the second compartment appears the saint, who making the sign of the cross, saves the life of a woman that her husband had *kindly* thrown out of a window. The third is by *Campagna*, and is one of the best. St. *Antonio* in this performs a very useful miracle, for he raises a young man at Lisbon from the dead, in order to clear his father from the unjust accusation of having murdered him. Another extraordinary miracle of his, is the joining on to his leg the foot of a child, who had it cut off, as a punishment for having kicked his mother. The conversion of an heretic, appears also amongst them; the heretic's name was *Alcardino*; he said he should be converted and become a disciple of St. *Antonio*, if a drinking-glass thrown out of the window should receive no fracture, through the power or interposition of the saint. The experiment was made, and the glass, instead of breaking, broke the stone to pieces on which it fell;  
upon

upon the *sight* of this miracle, the heretic was (as you may suppose) immediately converted. About the middle of the chapel is a fine altar of granite, in which is enclosed the body of St. Antonio: this altar is richly decorated with columns of verd antique, bronze statues of saints, some beautiful silver candlesticks of curious workmanship, and of great weight. One fine gold lamp and twenty-four of silver burn constantly in this chapel. The *Ex-votis* of gold and silver, cover the walls over. In the church are some monuments worthy observation; I noticed one in particular to the memory of *Helena Cornaro Piscopia*, a noble Venetian lady, who was honoured at Padua with the degree of Doctor in Philosophy for her great learning; I believe it would not be easy at this day, to find a Venetian lady capable of answering for a doctor's degree.

The Church of St. *Giustina* deserves notice; there are some good pictures in it, particularly one over the great altar, by P. Veronese, which has much merit, though considerably damaged by the damp. Several of the churches here are worth seeing, and some palaces. The hall of audience called *il Salone*, is one of the largest in all Italy; it is principally visited upon this account.

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Here you see several remarkable Monuments, two of them are to the memory of two as virtuous ladies as ancient Rome ever boasted of; one *La Marchesa Lucrezia Dondi Orogia*, wife of *Pio Enea, marchese de gli Obizzi*, who died in defence of her honour: the other, *Bianca de Rofs*, who was sacrificed upon the tomb of her husband, rather than submit to the tyrant *Ezzelino*. The stories of these ladies would take up more time than I can now command; besides, they are too shocking for relation. Adieu, for the present.

Verona, the 20th of June, 1771.

(In continuation.) Last night we reached Vicenza, which is about eighteen miles from Padua, and passed this morning in viewing the famous amphitheatre, &c. From Vicenza to Verona is thirty two miles; the road very tolerable, and the country well planted with mulberries and vines.

The face of the country is covered with water meadows, in which rice is generally cultivated. Nothing looks prettier than these meadows when the sun shines on them; the trenches for the water are cut in straight lines, and I do not know any thing so like a field of rice, as a fine pale green silk striped with silver.

*Vicenza* makes a singular appearance; as at first sight it presents you with nothing

but commencements of noble palaces, which have been left unfinished. These edifices (by Palladio), if completed, would have made this a beautiful city: two rivers run through the town, over which are three bridges, one of them by Palladio, is of beautiful proportions; it has but one arch, and on the parapet walls a balustrade of marble; the whole is simple, and in a noble style.

Palladio has also built *il teatro olympico*, 'tis his *chef d'œuvre* taken from the plans of the antique theatres; its form a demioval divided the long way; no boxes, but *gradins* or steps serve as seats for the spectators. There is but one scene, and that is fixed at the extremity of the stage, being a view of seven streets which seem to terminate there: these streets are decorated with temples and other public edifices, all in wood and immovable; they lessen in real perspective; I could walk through some of them, but the furthest grew too narrow to admit my passing. *The Prosce-nium* represents a triumphal arch, dedicated to Hercules; this theatre is esteemed one of the most perfect morsels of modern architecture the world can boast of.

In the *Piazzo d' Isola* is a beautiful front of a palace of *Palladio*. He was an accessory to the ruin of many of the great families at *Vicenza*, by drawing them into  
a taste

a taste for architecture. It is asserted here, that it was done from a motive of revenge, for their having imprisoned his son, who was an extravagant spendthrift, during the father's absence from *Vicenza*, who on his return gave them plans and false estimates, to induce them to begin upon what he knew they could never finish.

Here are some churches worth seeing: that of *la Santa Corona* contains a fine picture, by *P. Veronese*, of the Adoration of the Magi. The country about *Vicenza* is rather pleasing. A flat field, surrounded with a ditch, and planted with trees, is the place frequented by the inhabitants as a public walk. You enter by a triumphal arch erected by Palladio; it is of fine proportions, very much and very deservedly admired.

There are some elegant gardens and casinos in the neighbourhood of this city, but we had not time to visit them. Your accommodation in the inns, provisions, beds, &c. are better through the Venetian states than in most others of Italy. The river *Adigio* passes through this city, over which are three bridges: one in particular is remarkably fine; it is called *il Ponte di Castello Vecchio*.

The *Arena*, or antique amphitheatre, is the first object of curiosity at Verona; it is superb, and built in the same taste with  
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the *Colisseo* at Rome: the shape is oval. There are forty-five rows of gradins (steps) carried all round, formed of fine blocks of marble about a foot and an half high each, and about two feet broad. Twenty-two thousand persons may be seated here at their ease, allowing one foot and an half for each person. This amphitheatre is quite perfect, and has been lately as well as frequently repaired with the greatest care at the expence of the inhabitants. They frequently give public *spectacles* in it, such as horse-races, combats of wild beasts, &c. It is supposed to have been built in the reign of the emperor Trajan. Near the amphitheatre in the *Piazza Bra* is a museum, or collection of rarities and antiques, some very curious inscriptions, statues, &c. but we had time only to take a very cursory view of them. In this building is a kind of public room for conversation and cards, where the people of fashion of the town meet every evening. There is scarcely a small town in Italy that has not something of this kind. It is a much more sociable plan than the receiving their acquaintance in their own houses, which occasions much trouble and some expence. I should think, that were this practised in some country towns in England, under proper regulations, it might be productive of more society and rational amusement,

amusement, than the continual dining about with country neighbours, and the teasing importunity of visitors, not always in themselves agreeable. The theatre is spacious, and very convenient; it is almost circular, has five rows of boxes one over the other; each range consists of twenty-seven in number. To my great regret, there is no opera here at present; but they assure us that the music is excellent in the month of November, when they have as fine singers as any in Europe. They boast much of a *Cantatrice* of the name of *Aguiari*, commonly called the *Bastardina* of Ferrara, whose voice, they say, is of a wonderful compass and flexibility. Mentioning this singer reminds me, that when at the *Pieta* at Venice, they told us the famous Gabrieli was educated there, and a long story of the manner in which she contrived to escape from thence. I think I have mentioned this singer to you before, whose musical talents and capricious temper have given trouble to every body she has had to do with.

Here are some vestiges of antique arches and gate-ways, but none very fine. Most of the houses and other buildings in this city are marble. Several churches contain pictures and sculpture not unworthy the traveller's notice: but we had not time this morning to visit them, and the other

objects already mentioned, at our ease. We have employed the evening in viewing some cabinets of natural history. Amongst many rare and curious articles of the fossil kind, the petrified fish are the most surprising. I have packed up some to travel with us, as M— thinks they are a good addition to the little collection I have sent to England. These petrified fish are found at about eighteen miles distance from Verona, in the mountain *Bolea*, where are certain stones in layers, of a dusky, greyish, brownish hue; of about an inch thick in general, not rough, but of a superficies as smooth as a slate; they separate in slivers when taken from the quarry, by the application of the chissel; if that part is hit right which contains the print of the fish, the head, bones, fins, tail, &c. are so extremely well preserved, that it is easy to distinguish the species. They also find the impressions of leaves, plants, &c. but never any kind of petrified shell, or shell fish.

Though we have seen but little of the Veronese, yet are we inclined to think them ingenious, and more knowing in physicks, and the speculative branches of science, than the Italians in general.

To-morrow morning we mean to continue our route with as much expedition as possible towards Milan, from whence

you

you shall hear from us on our arrival. I am as ever, &c.

P. S. Though the post does not go from hence to-night, they assure me my letter will be equally safe with them.

## LETTER LV.

Milan, the 23d of June.

OUR arrival here last night, was through a violent storm of thunder and lightning, accompanied with gusts of wind and rain. We are well lodged at the best inn; the sign the Woman of Samaria, which I mention on account of its singularity. The night before last we slept at *Brescia*. From Verona to Milan is about one hundred and four miles, through a very rich soil and fertile country, closely cultivated with vines, mulberry-trees, and corn, &c.; its face is flat; at length the horizon is bounded by mountains, covered with snow: this sort of prospect continued to Bergamo. We had disagreeable rivers to pass, which are subject, it seems, in winter, to overflow their banks, and make the road extremely troublesome, if not dangerous. Some good pictures are to be seen at Brescia, as well in churches as in private collections;

but we did not make any delay in this town, arriving in the evening, and leaving it the next morning. The weather was so extremely hot and stormy, that there was no possibility of going to see any thing, unless we had determined to stay here a day or two, which did not appear to us to be worth while. This town is remarkable in history, and mentioned as the scene of many extraordinary events, both in ancient and modern times. I should have been glad to have seen the house the *Chevalier Bayard* occupied, when *Gaston de Foix* took the town. I dare say you recal the circumstances of this remarkable event, as mentioned in the reign of Lewis the Twelfth by the French historians.

Bergamo is the native country of Harlequin: here that absurd character originated, and although we did but change horses at that town, we had an opportunity of discerning the characteristics of the Italian harlequin. The post-master, the postilions, &c. have a species of humorous repartee, an arch manner of being alert, and an agility which participates both of mischief and folly in all their actions: they are quite different looking people from any other Italians we have yet seen. The road from Bergamo hither lies through the rich and delightful plains of Lombardy.

dy. For about twelve miles before we reached Milan, it was perfectly good; and the meadows, enclosed with hedge-rows, and watered by trenches calculated for that purpose, present the richest pasturage that can be seen. This city seems very large and considerable; we are already provided with Milanese servants, a coach, &c. The Prices are, for a very handsome town carriage, *fifteen pauls* per day, the *laquais de bouage*, *four pauls* each; our own dinner, *ten pauls* a piece; supper, the same; *four pauls* for the valet de chambre; *ten pauls* more our bed-chamber; and no charge for our dining-room. We are admirably well served, fed, and lodged. The trout of the Barromean lake are as large as the largest English salmon, and much better than any fish I ever tasted. The turkeys and all their fowl of every kind, being fed upon rice and milk, are not only the fattest, but I believe the best in the world. All other sorts of provisions, as well as game, in the greatest plenty and perfection. I shall write once more from hence; we shall not stay longer here than to see this city, &c. and then direct our course to Turin, &c.

King LETTER

## LETTER LVI.

Milan, June the 28th

**W**E set out on our journey to-morrow, and might reach Turin the same night, though it is ninety miles from hence, did we not prefer travelling in the cool of the day, and lying by during the heat; so we must sleep one night on the road. Milan, in my opinion, though very large and considerable, is not beautiful: some of the environs are pretty, and very convenient for taking the air in coaches. The Duke of Modena resides here (he is Vice-governor of the Milanese), with the princess his grand-daughter. Count Fermian represents her Imperial Majesty, he shares the government with the Duke: Count Fermian's very amiable character is so well known, that it is needless for me to repeat those praises which natives and foreigners so liberally bestow upon him; we wished to have seen so remarkable a man, but at this time he is absent from Milan.

Determining to make no acquaintance here, but to remain as little known as possible, we have sunk all our letters of recommendation; foreseeing that, instead of passing a few days at Milan, we might  
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be induced, by the civilities of those to whom our letters are addressed, to a residence of at least a month or six weeks, which would have destroyed our present plan of operations, and frustrated our intention of returning to you within the time proposed. The *Milanese* character is universally that of hospitality and kindness to strangers, and with our letters of recommendation, no doubt we should have found as much difficulty in leaving Milan, as in quitting Bologna. By this prudent measure we have seen all that is curious in this city, and shall depart tomorrow without regret. Should you be desirous of a description of the Duke, I will give it you another time, *if possible*, for to do him justice, I think he “*beggar’s* “*all description* ;” ask me not in what sense. — His grand-daughter has an amiable character ; she is to be married immediately to a brother of the Emperor. I shall now mention what we have seen : *Il Duomo*, the Cathedral Church, is situated in the center of the city : it is the most considerable edifice at Milan, and esteemed by many, the finest church in Italy after St. Peter’s at Rome. The columns that adorn and support it are superb ; particularly four pillars under the dome or cupola, which are about twenty-eight feet in circumference : it is profusely decorated with  
marbles,

marbles, statues, ornaments, &c. so that one fine thing hides another: whoever loves an extensive view, may find one that will content him from the top of the dome. The famous Chapel of St. Charles *Barromeo* is under part of the church; his body is entire, and lies in a crystal case, finely dressed in rich pontifical habits; his face is quite perfect, excepting just the tip of the nose, but his skin is of the colour and consistency of parchment: it has a shining appearance, like a burn or scald newly healed; he has silk gloves on: his portrait is preserved in a little chapel just by; it is done in embroidery by the famous Peregina, and exhibits a strong likeness to what he is at present. He caused his catacomb (which is very near his chapel) to be dug out before his death, where his body had remained an hundred and eighty-seven years, at the time of its removal into this crystal case. The octagonal panes of rock crystal, of which the case is formed, are each ten inches long and eight broad; they are set in silver gilt: his crozier, which lies by him, is richly ornamented with diamonds. The walls of this chapel are lined with silver pannels, wrought in *basso relievo*; whose subjects are, the birth, life, and death of this Saint: this chapel is always illuminated, and is a rich treasure in itself. In the church, over  
the

the grand altar, is placed *il sacro chiodo* (the sacred nail), a relic for which the Milanese have a great veneration; enclosed in crystal, and surrounded with a gilt glory: it is what Constantine used for a bit for his horse, when he went to battle: Theodosius presented it to this church, and 'tis carried in procession every third of May. The sculpture, in marble and in wood, of the choir, is highly finished, and demands an accurate observation. The famous statue of St. Bartholomew is finely done, but there is something so shocking in the contemplation of a man flayed alive, that I could not look at it long; on the pedestal is this inscription,

*Non me Praxiteles, sed Marcus finxit Agrati.*

The treasury contains a great number of articles in gold, silver, and precious stones, to a large amount. Next to this church the Ambrosian Library is highly esteemed here, which by no means answered the descriptions I had read of it, either in respect to the number of books, or the collection of paintings, sculpture, medals, &c. that are asserted to be contained in it. This library is really appropriated to the use of the Public *gratis*, being open every day, and a great many people frequent it, and read commodiously whatever books they think

think fit; their time is not limited, nor is there any kind of restraint put upon them. The *Gabinetto*, or Museum, belongs to the library; this collection was made by one Manfredo Settala, a *Milanois*, remarkable for his learning and application to the study of natural history, antiquities, &c. One of the most curious articles, in this collection, is a lump, or ball of crystal; in the centre of which you plainly distinguish a drop of clear water. Amongst the pictures the following are the most remarkable; a Virgin, by Carraccio. A portrait of a doctor, by Corregio. A Madonna, by Rubens, encircled in a garland of flowers. The *Cartone* of the School of Athens, of the same size with the picture in the Vatican, by Raffaello. A Virgin, a Dutcheß of Milan, a Doctor and a Physician who grasps a dagger, by Leonardo da Vinci. A beautiful Peter Nef, representing the cathedral at Anvers. The four elements in miniature, in oils, by J. Brughel. This Flemish painter has discovered some little degree of fancy in the representations of the elements: the figures are so diminutive, that they cannot be clearly distinguished without a microscope. There are many other morsels of his to be seen here; in general, his temptations of St. Antonio are the best and most humorous of his paintings. They shew in this cabinet certain

tain manuscripts of Leonardo da Vinci, on which they set an immense value, consisting chiefly of notes and figures, and here and there a very rough sketch indeed; however, it appears by a busto of one Galeas Arconati, a citizen of Milan, placed in this museum as a reward for his generous conduct, that James the Sixth of Scotland offered three thousand pistoles for one of these volumes; but this citizen, whose property they were at that time, preferred the giving them to the Ambrosian Library, to the pistoles the King had proffered him. While we were examining the contents of the museum, the *Ciceroni* who shews them beckoned to us to follow him, and conducted me to a case, in which was placed a skeleton; he bid me (with the utmost gravity) consider it attentively. I did so, and then asked him what there was extraordinary or remarkable in that skeleton? He replied, that it was the skeleton of the greatest beauty Milan had ever produced. By this lady's will, her heirs were enjoined to have her body dissected, fixed in a case, and placed in the Ambrosian Library, that every one of her sex, who should come to see that collection, should be shewn her skeleton; and be informed at the same time, that that skeleton once possessed such charms as made all the artists of Milan pronounce her perfect in every

every personal beauty; that she was esteemed and beloved by all who knew her, prizing her superior talents, uncommon understanding, and wit, for which she was as remarkable for her beauty. — After a long harangue in words to this purpose, he at length informed me, that I must come at last to such a state. Whether he thought I should have wept at such an extraordinary piece of information, or what he expected, I know not, but I made him no other answer than bursting into a laugh, and asking him, whether he took me for a *stolta* (a fool), he seemed greatly surpris- ed and disappointed, and I suppose thought me a very wicked wretch, quite hardened in heresy.

The church of San Vittore is a very elegant edifice, highly decorated with gilding and other ornaments. Here is a picture of the blessed *Bernardo Tolomeo*, by Battoni of Rome; the subject is the above *blessed Bernardo* assisting people who are dying of the plague. This is the best painting the church contains. *Le Grazie*, the church of the Dominicans: this church was founded by *Luigi Sforce*, Duke of Milan; Beatrice his wife is interred here: the beautiful proportions of the cupola are much admired. Here is a picture by Tiziano, that the Milanese esteem one of his very best paintings; the subject is, Christ crowned with thorns.

thorns. In one of the chapels is a St. Paul, by Godenzio Ferrari da Novara: this is a good picture, and the first I ever saw by this master, to the best of my remembrance. In the refectory of this convent, is the most famous of all the pictures done by Leonardo da Vinci; it represents the Last Supper, and is painted in fresco on the wall; it is a very large piece, occupying the whole end of the refectory. On the table, at one end, Leonardo has represented a dish of fried trout, of the famous lake near Milan; at the other end, a paschal lamb *larded*: the dish placed before our Saviour is empty; before each disciple stands a goblet of wine, and the table is garnished with rolls of bread and apples. The figure intended to represent our Saviour, is pretty well done, particularly the face, which expresses the utmost benevolence, clemency, and grace. You readily remark, that the painter has given six fingers to St. John: the disciples are poorly done, excepting Judas, which Leonardo exerted his utmost abilities to finish. This picture, upon the whole, is finely coloured, although much spoiled; the perspective is good; there is much vigour in the design, and a very fine air in all the heads: it is in a great style and manner, without being much studied, or highly finished. I shall give you a curious anecdote concerning

concerning this picture: Some time past, the superior of these holy brethren was so strikingly like the Judas both in person and mind, that every one perceiving the resemblance, the monk, in a fit of vexation, ordered it to be white-washed all over: thus it remained forgot and lost to the world for several years; till an English traveller, who had read of such a painting, by diligently examining the wall, discovered its concealment; the monks had its white skin taken off, by which operation the picture was injured in several places. In the fresco paintings of the life of St. Dominique, purgatory is represented at the bottom of a well, and the Virgin is employed in drawing up souls by means of her chaplet, in the same manner as a bucket is drawn up by a rope.

Unfortunately for me, who am so fond of music, there is no opera here at this season; the *comedia* is the only theatrical amusement.

The Theatre is a very large building, consisting of five ranges of boxes, thirty-five in each range: its plan is almost square. The boxes are large enough to receive and return visits, to play at cards, and to sup in, which custom is practised here as much as at Genoa. As to *la Comedia*, I could not enter much into the humour of it, never having read or seen it before; but it seemed

ed to me to be a satirical piece, somewhat in the style of the French comedy of *le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*: what diverted me almost as much as it did the Milanese, was the part of Harlequin in the farce; his blunders, action, attitudes, were worthy a true son of *Bergamo*. When he serves his master at supper, he is ordered to make the sallad, and to observe particularly to put salt enough, and then to stir it well about. To obey the first order he brings a measure of salt as much as a large dish can hold, and flings it all in; then having forgot the oil, fetches a great lamp, supposed to be burning in the hall, empties it entirely of the foetid train-oil, and upon deep reflection puts the cotton wick in also; he then brings a vessel, *not* intended for vinegar, and slops in the contents; he lastly fetches the stable dung-fork, and stirs the sallad till he is almost extenuated. His master, at length losing all patience, frightens poor Harlequin out of his wits, who implores pardon on his knees for his giddiness and want of thought. The master takes him again into favour, on promise of amendment, and orders him to cut him a slice of *pane col, molto delicatezza*: here Harlequin errs again; he goes out to fetch a knife, but meeting with a marble saw in his way, thinks that may do the business much more effectually; he brings it with  
difficulty,

difficulty, and commences sawing the loaf. I really am ashamed at taking up your leisure with such a nonsensical narration, but the truth is, the foibles here alluded to, are not much exaggerated; and as I have seen some Italian servants of the tribe of Harlequin, I was more diverted than I should have otherwise been.

The weather is so extremely uncertain, that I am afraid to venture to the Barro-mean islands; the palaces, or pleasure-houses, which were once so delightful, they tell us, are in a most ruinous condition, and not worth seeing; M— would fain go, but I have dissuaded him from it. As there has been an holy day since we have been here, we had the pleasure of seeing how extremely opulent the citizens and their families appear, even down to the lowest mechanic; though I cannot say I liked to see blacksmiths and shoemakers with gold and silver stuffs in waistcoats, long swords, and embroidered knots; tailors in brocade, and fine laced ruffles, &c. This is carrying opulence into luxury; at the same time, waving these ridiculous excesses, I was rejoiced to see every body appear rich, and happy. The women are in general very handsome. The noblese and great ladies dress in a more noble style than at Paris, and have a very genteel air and manner; their clothes are  
of

of the richest materials, and better made than any I have yet seen in Italy.

Adieu for the present; it is now late, and I must be up early to-morrow.

## LETTER LVH.

Turin, June the 30th.

WE reached this, our first acquaintance of the Italian towns, yesterday. Having lain at Novara, a very indifferent inn, where we had no rest from the vulgar and brutal noises made by the postilions and helpers, &c. who, playing and quarrelling at cards all night long, so frightened me, that I expected to hear in the morning they had assassinated each other, but happily no mischievous consequence ensued. Our journey here was made very disagreeable by the frequent crossing of rivers; some by means of a raft, others we were obliged to ford. The current of the *Tessin* in particular was so strong, that we had like to have met with an ugly accident; it was as much as could be done to avoid being carried forcibly down the river. We also crossed the *Doro*, whose sands are mixed with grains of pure and fine gold. The road was not very safe neither, as there was a banditti who lay concealed

concealed in a forest not far removed. Armed peasants were ordered by the magistrates to patrol, four or five in a company, in their turns, between one village and another, in order to assist travellers, in case of necessity; and as the road lies through both the king of Sardinia's territories and the Milanese, it is a convenient circumstance that these villains sometimes avail themselves of, to escape into the one or the other state, when they ply on the borders of both.

We shall leave this city as soon as we have seen our acquaintance, then proceed to Lyons, and after a few days stay there, press on to the south. Our intention is, that this excursion shall not take up more time than three weeks, being anxious to see those monuments of Roman magnificence, which still remain at Nismes, Orange, Arles, &c. of which you shall have a full and true account.

When in France, which we shall be in a few days, you must fancy us very near you. We, it is true, shall be in the south, and you in the north; but you know, in this instance, that north and south are not very far asunder. I can give you one circumstance which will afford you pleasure, that we are assured the roads through the Savoy have been so well mended; previous to the young princess's journey to *the Comte de*

*de Provence*, that travelling over them is no longer inconvenient or dangerous. We like this town as much as before we had seen all the others of Italy: I shall go again to visit the King's Palace, from an assurance of finding it as much to my taste as formerly.

The weather is delightfully fine, and the environs in high beauty. His Majesty has not neglected his works at the Valentin in our absence, there is a great deal of earth moved and much done; it may probably be completed before winter. We are lodged at an hotel called *les Armes d'Angleterre*; the apartments are good, and we are well served. As we propose being here but a few days, we thought it more convenient to lodge in an hotel, than to have the trouble of a house and house-keeping. Adieu, &c.

APPEN;



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## A P P E N D I X.

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*Descrizzionne orittografica del ponte Naturale  
di Veja ne' Monti Veronesi, e d' un tratto  
di paese all' intorno.*

Al chiarissimo Sigr Giovanni Arduino, publico  
Sopraintendente all' agricoltura, &c. ALBER-  
TO FORTIS.

**N**ON Signore, io non ho fatto un autunno ozioso, come voi forse lo credete l'amenità di Verona tutti gl' incanteffimi dit società, de quali e' posseditore, ed artefice il Capitan Lorgna, quando si spoglia della sua ispida sopraveste di xxii, e discende a noi, i lampi, ci fulmini originali del divino Riviera, che fa' sul nostro Globo cio, che il Giove d'omero minaccia di far in cielo agli Dei minori; l'apparizione in aspettata dell' amabilissimo nostro Abate Talier, che contro l'uso ricevuto sotto tanta modestia e soavità di maniere còpre si estesa erudizione, e profonda dottrina la domestica compagnia del vostro estimatore P. Vivorzio, prefatissimo amico mio, che agran passi cammina per ottenere in età freschissima un distinto posto fra Matematici d' Italia; e mille altre cose atte radicare un uomo, non che a trattenerto per pochi giorni in una città, non mi v'hanno poputo fermare.

Lo Sapeva benissimo, che un amatore della chimica non dee alton anarsi due dita da Vincenzo

VOL. III.

L

Bozza,

Bozza, il quale ne possiede le ultime finesse: ne aveva di bisogno mi fosse detto che un ricercatore di Fossili trouva poseolo per pochi giorni nella ricca e fitta e sora collezione del nostro Giulio Moreni, e che un cultore divoto delle muse non può in coscienza allontanarsi volontariamente dalla patria di Catullo, del Cotta, del Bonfadio, del Fracastoro, lo spirito dequali presiede ancora alla letteratura Veronese. Mi si Moltiplicavano poi ad ogni passo per la via degli occhi gl' inviti a restare, perquanto per quanto dalle circostanze m' era permesso, fra quelle fortunate.

Ma ora, che vantano per loro Cittadino l' immortale Paolo Calliari, ed oltre tanti altri rinomati Pittori di quella età, un Zotari, un Cagnaroli, eccellenti pennelli del nostro secolo.

Ad onta pero di tutto questo, io feci le mie scappate montane, d'una delle quali, che mi condusse a scorrere un tratto di paese del tutto nuovo per me, vi rendero conto tanto piu volentieri, quanto che il ritorno sollecito del nostro impareggiabile Sigr S. diligente, e infaticabile indagatore di quanto l'arte, o la natura ha prodotto di singolare, m' ha fatto ribattere il camino medesimo pochi giorni doppo la prima gitá, e riconfermare le mie osservazione. Voi avete un divetto incontestabile di sapere prima d' ogni altro il risultato de miei Viaggiacci d'osservazione, voi, che se non me la ispiraste da prima, fortificaste certamente un inclinazione nata con me.

M' era da molto tempo giunta agl' orecchi la fama del celebre ponte naturale di Veja, lavorato da quelli operarii, che servono alla gran Madre, fra le rupi de Monti Veronesi, non piu che dodici Miglia lontano dalla Citta a Settentrione, frai Vilaggi di Prun, e di Fano.

Una descrizione di esso ponte publicata dal celebre Sigr Zaccaria Betti del 1767. Mi venne alle mani in quest' autunno per la prima volta, le grazie dello stile, e l' aspetto del ponte medesimo, ch' egli

egli se incidere in rame, mi risvegliarono il desiderio antico di vederlo cogli occhi proprj; il corso stravagante de' gli stratti espressi nella figura m' avea mal prevenuto dell' ezatezza dell' arteficio; io avrei giurato ch' egli s' era preso qualche arbitrio, non sospetando d'opporli diametralmente infacendolo alle costanti leggi della natura in fatto di montagne.

Ne parlai cogli amici; e L' Ab. Willi mi si esibì cortesemente per socio, come pratico del paese. Più opportuno regalo d'un compagno pratico non poteva essermi fatto; ne più atto ad istruirmi, e togliermi la noja del camino lo avrei saputo desiderare. Il valoroso Sigr Bona comune amico ci benedì una mattina per tempo con una pozione corroborante di perfetto cioccolato; e quindi noi divotamente montati su due prudenti cavalcature presimo fuor di porta S.—Zenone la via de Monti.

La Nebia densissima, che ingombrava la pianura, e la più bassa parte de' colli, mi tolse il piacevole spettacolo, che i varj ponti di prospettiva doveano farmi godere; v' avea però un vantaggio in questo danno: tutti gli oggetti mi riascivano affatto nuovi, a misura che mi s' avvicinavano al naso, oltre la portata del quale non si vedea motto.

Noi non avevamo presa direttamente la via del ponte di Teja, la guida, gentilmente maliziosa, e soverchiatrice, abuzava dell' ignoranza mia per furmi nascere improvviso un piacere, cui io avea mostrato desiderare, se fosse stato combinabile col camino naturale del nostro viaggio. Ló mi trovai, doppo d'esser passato da Gargagnago, ore diceasi abbia villeggiato Dante, che v' avea de' poderi, e doppo forse 12. Miglia di cavalcare fra il bujo cenognolo delle nebbie, poco discosto da Mazurega, e dalla deliziosamente situata abitazione de' quattro Frattelli Sigr Lorenzi ciascun de' quali così felicemente riuscì nello studio, cui volle applicarsi, che

nella stessa famiglia un egregio oratore, un eccellente poeta, ed improvvisatore, un pittor valoroso, che par bazzica in Parnasso ed un bulino finissimo si ritrova. Copriva un mare di nebia la Val Policella di cui una gran parte si scopre dall altezza di Mazurega; e fu bello spettacolo per me, che finalmente era giunto all aria serena, il vedermelo sotto i piedi agitato come da una procella alzare di gran fiatti e cavalloi, che ora barcollando oscillavano, ora inseguivansi rapidamente l'un l'altro cacciati dal vento la bassa parte de colli, ch' io aveva battuta, non mi somministrò curiosità fossili; la pietra vi e' ordinariamente roffigna, e di pasta analoga al marmo di Verona comune; non atta pero al lavoro se dalla superficie del suolo si prende, perche tutta screpoli, e fenditure, e quasi trinciata in quadrelle. V'ha bensì una interessante cosa per voi alquanto piu su, e vicino immediatamente alla casa sudetta degli amici, ed ospiti miei. V' ha della terra calcaria, ch' e' marna vera e reale, bianca, leggiera, quasi polverosa. Il Sigr Francesco Lorenzi, non contento di adoperare con applauso il penello, e la cetra, coltiva molto attentamente la Georgica, e in un suo praticello magro, e sterile, anzi che non, ha' con ottimo esito sparfa di quella terra, doppo d'averla purgata da sassi, che forse in troppo numero vi si trovano mescolati. Il praticello adesso e oltre modo erbofo; ed il celebre Sigr Al. Lorenzi, che sta lavorando colla usata felicità ed eleganza sua un utile e dilettevolissimo Poema sopra la coltivazione de monti, vi parlera di questa trasformazione, e arrischiera di perdere la grazia di quel dabbene, e pacifico cittadino, che non correbbe, si cercasse la marna o si studiasse ch' egli non ha creduto ben fatto di studiare.

A Mazurey non abstano solamente le muse, e belle arti v e' anche un'abitazione di Gnomi, e delle osservabili eh'io m'abbia vedute, quantunque  
non

non dèlle piu vaste. E questa una cava di marmi, in cui si lavora da soli quarant'anni. La pasta d'essi marmi disposti a strati parrallele orizzontali dolcemente inclinati, si rasomiglia sempre, parrebbe che le materie grosse componenti gli strati de monti beronesi e d'una parte de vicentini fossero per tutto quel vasto tratto quassi cottantemente le medesime: e che solo dalle torbide cariche di terra ora in un modo ora in un altro, siano risultate e varietà del marmo rosso del bianco, e loro gradazioni. V'e eziandio notabile, differenza tra le grossezze didetti strati e di questa non meno che dalla situazione che hanno egline tratti i differenti nomi, co' quali dagli scavatori sono disegnati. Vedessi sovente fra l'uno strato e l'altro un filo piu omeno sottile d'ocra semipetrosa: et alvolta non v'é cosa, che li divida visibilmente al di fuori; quantunque reale divisione e separazione orizzontale v'abbia nell'interno fra quelle gran lastre probabilmente prodotto dalla varietà détempi, e de' modi dell'induramento loro, la caverna ha una bocca assai regolarmente tagliata di dodeci piedi quadrati all'incirca; il vano s'interna profondo cento piedi seguendo l'indole degli strati, che ascendendo no soavemente, ne avrà di larghezza intorno a 70. i pilastri lasciati nel vivo per sostenere la, volta, sono così bene scarpellati, che adorna l'irregolarità loro, presentano un rustico maestoso, che piace. A, vedere la fatica la pazienza, l'industria, il tempo che costa a poveri scarpellini l'esecuzione di quei lastroni si direbbe che ogni quadro di marmo dee valere un tesoro. Lo strato che serve di volta ha ogimai sentito il muneamento de' fondamenti, egli si e fesso, edisquilibrato poco lungi dell'entrata della caverna le acque concorrono alla fenditura dal di sopra, e ne scolano; benchè la quantità loro sia poca eleno faranno delle rovine col tempo. Gli osservatiri non avari d'

anni, fanno, che non solo una gocciola ostinatamente cadendo scava la pietra ma che poche stille hanno a poco a poco rovesciato i più pezzanti massi aprono nelle più campatte pietre gran fenditure destinate a divenire valli, e gran divisioni di monti, collo scorrere de' secoli. Mi pare che i contemplatori degli angoli salienti, ed entranti non abbiano esaminato bene il l'avoro de' torrenti. Eglino si farebbono ris parmiata peravventura la fatica di domar l'acque del mare prescrivendo legge a loro irregolari movimenti. E verità conosciuta nella storia degli uomini, che piccole cause hanno mai sempre prodotti i più strepitosi ed importanti avvenimenti; chi sa leggere ben adentro negli annali del nostro Globo ritrova migliaia d'esempj di questo anche nelle di lui rivoluzioni fisiche, ed è vero motivi che i più minuti, ed agli occhi del volgo spregevoli osservazioni in fatto d'orittologia, conducono a intendere fenomeni molto rimoti, e a stabilire le Teorie, che sembrano strane oltremodo ed ardate a timidi Filosofanti. A molti maestri eruditi par ampolloso e strano il ragionare cui non intendono, ma voi farete d'opinione, che di coloro i quali odiano l'osservare, gli osservatori e il linguaggio loro liberamente espressivo, qualunque siano, non sene debba far conto. Un Galantuomo che trova qualche cosa di nuovo, perchè non potrà esprimerla con nuovi modi? può vietarselo senza taccia di stravaganza.

Passammo quella giornata tutta, e la sera in compagnia di que' coltissimi fratelli. La Mattina seguente ci posammo di nuovo in cammino verso il ponte. So che non avea veduti per anche segni di Vulcani nel mio viaggio, se alcuni ciottoli sene eccettuino, che costeggiando i monti alla lontana, s'erano incontrati per lapianura i dorfi di S. Fiorino, a quattro miglia forse da Mazurega, verso Veia, me ne offerirono i primi segni, io diedi all'improvviso in un'area ferigna dura pesante, e nerissima.

rissima. La pasta degli strati vicini é analoga alle pietre calcarie di Nanto, di Costoza, di S. Gotardo, &c. nel vicentino. Su' quelle cime, e ne contorni v'hanno tutte le apparenze, che si debbano trovare de' petrefatti, anche fuor del matoen, che cosi è chiamata quella spezie di pietra poco dura di Veronesi.

Andand'oltre, incontrammo il paese di Marano. Gli strati petrosi veggonsi colá sollevati da un vulcano e stanno come una gran tavola su la cima di quel monte, posando sopra materie cretose, granite, di vari colori, e sopra ribollimenti Vulcanici ravvultolati a guisa di gran cipolle, fomiglianti a quei che si veggono presso di Vicenza, alle falde, e su le cime del Berico piu Basso si scopre, tutto all'interno di quella vetta rotonda, la continuazione dello strato superiore, che formerebbe una voragine, se quella sommità si sprofondasse un giorno quanto s'alzo con violenza. Questo rialzamento si trova a sinistra della strada comune; a destra si vedè già nella valle una collina sterile, e nuda, tutta di materie, vulchaniche verdastre, e oltre essa il fianco del monte della medesima pasta sembra che il vano della valle fosse tutto pieno di quelle eruzioni, che, scarfa porzione di materia vitrescente contenendo, rimasero poco compitte, e per conseguenza aprirono un agevole passaggio alle acque de' piu alti luoghi che apoco apoco scavarono quella gran vescica, l'arsiccio colinetto nel mezzo lasciandovi, disposto a scemare sgretolandosi ad occhi veggenti forse da qualche antica bicocca, di cui non resta vestigio chiamasi quel promontorio Castel Beseno; uno degli abitanti ci disse, che nel vicino monte detto Noroni si trovavano produzioni di mare lapidefatte; e che un D. Stefano Ruzenente ne portava a Verona: rilevammo anche dai discorsi del Villano, che il buon collettore D. Stefano era diluvianista.

Il paese, cui attraversammo, non è orrido, non ameno, ma squallido, e disgustoso. Tutto v'è magrezza, sterilità, sparatezza e nemmeno il Biancheggiante colore de' sassi sparsi per le falde coltivate appaga l'occhio coll'aspetto d'una in fecondità non disagiata, poichè anche i sassi vi sono foschi. Ci fermammo, con intenzione di pranzare a Prun, paese situato alla parte opposta di Marano, e che diede anticamente il nome alla valle Policella, chiamata da nottri arcibisavoli Praina: Ma l'intenzione andò a voto per metà: provvigioni non v'aveano, nè cosa ragionevole da mangiare ne nasce, o muore in quelle coste scagliese: non viti, non castagni nè v'allignano, non erbe da cuocere; io credo la poca gente, che v'è, viva di numeri: ma non saprebbe far bene i suoi conti chi dovendo andarvi, non si portasse qualche sorta di cibo. Usciti di là trovammo la strada molta comoda, e deliziosa per un buon tratto, costeggiando la valle detta di S. Anna. Finalmente giungiamo a Crestena, casolare meschino, dove, importa da chi volesse far il mio viaggio si sappia, che v'è un cortese sacerdote, non somigliante all'insospitale Aruprete di Bolea; e di là fummo guidati al ponte cento passi prima di giungervi s'attraversa un prato, che ha il fondo quasi tutto di focaja; la strada che v'è aperta n'è piena, Ve ne hanno de' pezzi di Vago colore e che farebbono atti a Lavori. Voi Sapete che grandissima quantitate di ca cedonio, ed i selci variamente colorate s'incontra per li monti Veronesi, d'onde ci vengono per la maggior parte le pietre focaje da uso.

Lo aveva bene studiato il libretto del Cel. Sigr. Betti e tratto tratto me lo andava traendo di faccoccia per rinfrescarmene la memoria, quindi sono andato facendo qualche annotagioncella marginale, ch' io ho attualmente sotto gli occhi e vi trascrivo, egli e per avventura un tratto d'audacia questo mio volervi descrivere una magnificenza della

della natura da così elegante penna illustrata: ma se porrete mente alla dimestichezza ch'io ho colle rupi, e cogli orrori grandiosi, che fra greppi s'ammirano bene spesso, e vi ricorderete che non solo in piana prosa, ma in versi talvolta ardisco descrivere l'asprezza rigogliosa, e le interiori tenebre eterne, troverete; che me si può perdonare.

Arrivai camminando, quasi senza vedermene, all'orto d'una gran bocca circondata da ciglioni tagliati a piombo tutto all'intorno, se non che l'acque vi si hanno aperto, qualche angusto passaggio logorandoli aleuna fessura. Vi si discende dalla parte di mezzo giorno per uno s'drucciolevole sentierino; a sinistra scendendo si vede un foro verticale nel masso, che è tutto foderato interiormente di accutissime cristallizzazioni spatose; la presso v'ha una cava incominciata di terra gialla da Pittori d'affai buona qualita, pezzata di verde fine. Uno strato però molto più ricco, e da cui si trae gran quantita della terra medesima, trovasi più alto dall'altro lato a destra del ponte, fuori della Vallicella. Questa affetta la figura circolare irregolarmente, ed è ingombra da un capo all'altro fin sotto il ponte di massi smisurati. L'imposto di quei gran pezzi di scoglio mostra, ch'eglino appartennero ad uno degli strati più alti, e superiori alla superficie presente del vivo dell'arco ch'è pianissimo. Lastro di rosso di Verona; e vale adire, che probabilmente piombarono da intorno a settanta piedi d'altezza perpendicolare.

A levante l'area della vasea ascende un cotal poco verso il ciglione che fa fronte; di là discendere qualche copia d'acqua ne tempi piovosi, che si scarica formando un rigagno poco affervabile pel volume, ma molto per gli effetti, per di sotto il ponte, dal di cui arco è chiuso l'avallamento a ponente. Meritano riflessione gli strati di breccia componenti il ciglione che sorge di facciata all'arco, eglino sono più alti, ne hanno dietro se monti su-

periori dalle materie de quali possano dirsi fabbricati l'arco, e formato dalla continuazione degli strati, che corrono tutto all'intorno di quella profondità, la di cui estensione d'oriente in occidente sarà di circa 150 piedi da Mezzogiorno a Tramontana di 100 le divisioni di questi gran fogli (passatemi l'ardita espressione) del libraccio, che contiene una parte dell'antica storia del nostro pianeta, sono assai visibili: e vi si ponno contare parecchi strati di varie grossezze, e colori. Nel vivo dell'arco del ponte ch'è grosso 20 piedi, si noverano stando abosso du chi ha buoni occhi oltre trenta divisioni più o meno espresse, lequali non sono convenientemente segnate nella figura fatta eseguire dal Sigr Betti, che avra infallibilmente comandato bene ma che fu per certo servito male. Io ho vivamente dipinto nella fantasia quel grand arco che dalla parte internaha più di 114 piedi Veronesi di corda, secondo le misure prese dal suo illustratore alle quali mi sono stimato in dovere di quasi sempre riportarmi. Confrontandone sopra il luogo la figura espressa nella T. 11. del Sigr Betti ho veduto cha l'architetto disegnatore non è stato esatto, strapazzando, e ravvolgendo nell'ombra un magnifico frontale, che sporge in fuori forse dieci piedi ad angolo retto, e maltrattando i canali divisorj, e parrahelli de' lastroni; ha però supplito lo scrittore ingegnoso con quella elegantissima sua pena; La facciata interna del ponte, che guarda l'oriente, e molto più dilettevole ad osservarsi che l'opposta, per la forma regolare dell'arco assai gelosamente osservatavi, non meno che per la prodiga magnificenza colla quale visono i materiali disposti. Vi grandeggia quella specie di conchendenza superiore che rende originali le opere de più eccellenti maestri; e vi scorge una certa armonia colle aggiacenze, che appaga e sodisfa del pari gli occhi e la mente. Immaginatevi qualche cosa di stranamente grandioso. Un Ponte tutto d'un Pezzo largo cinquanta

quanta piedi dove l'arte non ha messo le mani, che forma un arco regolare piu di venti piedi grosso ne ha sessantadue di saeta, e riposa su d'un paio di palistrone di scoglio alti ottantasei, dee fare una grande impressione. E pure la facciata, che guarda l'occidente appagandomi meno, mi ha sbalordito di piu. Non vi cercate regolarita; non ve n'è vestigio. Ella è uno sbozzaccio gigantefeo e scoretto; da sinistra fa un brutto verso a cagione d'uno sconcio mosso che forge a gombito importunamente vicino alla caduta della picciol acqua spargendo indentro, e a destra sbardelatamente stendesi in lungo, e in largo, facendo quasi un atrio, o un portico di mezza volta senza sostegni alla caverna vicina. L'ardita irregolarita di questa facciata la rende un oggetto totalmente differente dall'altra, e che quindi fa tutto diversa impressione. E pare che molte mara viglisse cose vi si veggano in un colpo d'occhio, non una solo aggiungete a quel grand arco gettato là come in sogno sopra 154 piedi di corda, l'errore magnifico delle rupi ignude, e tayliate a piombo, che lo fiancheggiano, estendonfi a destra, e a sinistra per lungo tratto, la profondità della valle, in cui da di sotto il vasto Ponte precipita sustenendo il burrone è il fondo di quella bocca che si vede fuor per gran varco della curvatura, ingombra, è circondata da masse torreggianti, adornate questo alpestre ignudo, rovinoso disabitato orrore di pochi arboscelli nati a ciocche qua e colà fra le fenditure degli scogli come a dispetto storpi, e rabbassati; interrompete tratto la regolarita eo corrispondente si degli strati con ispacature, osfaldature perpendicolari, e colla negrezza degli antri e spelonche inaccessibile che s'intenano fra que gran letti di marino, e avrete come da una camera ottica lo spettacolo che mi forprese, allorché passato sotto il ponte mi fermai ad osservarne le schiene i fianchi e le appendici.

Il Ponte di Rialto me la perdoni ; ma io non lo posso pia guardare—con quella maraviglia di prima. Eglié un miracolo dell'arte ; dell'una e dell'altra parte e fiancheggiato da Palazzi superbi, va tutto bene ; ma chi ha veduto il ponte di Veia con quelle fue magnifiche vicinanze abitate da lupi, e dall'aquile, puo vedere Rialto senza scomporsi, il massimo difetto della figura delineata dall'architetto Coroni si é di non dar anche lo spaccato del ponte, che avrebbe potuto portare per conseguenza il disegno della portentosa oridezza aggiacentevi a destra, e a sinistra, e dirimpetto. Tutti qué dirupi, che da disotto il ponte si vedono, meritano d'uscire da boschi per opera del Bulino. Una diligente storia naturale, che ne presentasse i fossili, le piante, e gl'insetti, ed uccelli che v'abitano, farebbe impresa del nostro secolo, e del genio Veronese. Non si vorrebbe risparmiare spesa, o diligenza in siffatte cose. Ella e gran vergogna per noi, che i forestieri vengano ad illustrare, come va la curiosita naturali de paesi nostri, e ne portino in lontane terre le produzioni che ci mancano né musei, e che appena noi conosciamo. Un de piu raguardevoli personaggi dell' Inghilterra, gran ministro protettore dichiarato delle belle arti tutte, e promotore generoso della scienza naturale ; cui possiede fondatamente, ha fatto disegnare le Valli di Ronca e Brendola nella state passata cosa che invano s'avrebbe sperato d'ottenere da nostri. Il celebre M. Segulier e venuto a farci la Fiera Veronese ; ma questi si e troppo ben pasato portando con se in Francia la ricca collezione del fu'Arciprete spada, noto per catalogo de Fossili Veronese da lui pubblicato. Dobbiamo arroffire in pensando al miserabile prezzo, per cui e stata venduta a quel dotto straniero una serie di produzioni naturali, che avea costato tonto denaro, fatica ed attenzione. Ma lasciamo queste malinconie,  
delle

delle quali abbiamo a vergogna nostra assai di sovente nuovi e sempi, e torniamcene al ponte.

Tanto a destra, che a sinistra sotto l'arco v'ha una caverna. La meno vasta e lunga intorno a cinquanta piedi, larga quindici, e molto alta; vi fiorisce quantità di salnitro. L'altra che s'interna di molto, é a destra di chi osserva il grand arco al di fuori; la sua bocca é coperta da quel magnifico capellone a mezza volta ch'io v'ho descritto; uno stratto non continuo d'ocra da pittori semi-petrosa, meglio colorita di quella, che ho accenata le sta dinanzi; un letto di breccia composta d'antichissimi rottani, vi si scopre quasi parallelo, ed ha molto di che pensare a chi fa come si formino le breccie. Il capitan lorgna ha ben acconciamente osservato, come accenero piu sotto, che v'era della differenza fra quaeſto strato, e i superiori. Queglino che immediatamente vi sopraſtanno, sono di pietra morta, o matone secondo il dialetto Veroneſe. Lá caverna e ſcavata per entro aqueſta materia, e merita oſſervazione la grotteſca ſcabroſità della volta, prodotta forſe da fuori ſtalattici; ella é assai ſpazioſa per alquanti paſſi, ma poi ſ'abbaſſa all'improviſo, e coſtringe chi vuol ire innanzi a curvarſi quanto piu é poſſibile. Per otto o dieci paſſi fa d'uopo camminare incoſi incomoda poſitura. Ad onta della noja, che queſta facenda recavami, io profittai della vicinanza della volta al ſuolo, per oſſervare, che la ſcabroſità dell'una corriſpondono coſi perfettamente a quelle dell'altro, che ſe da una forſe proporzionata foſſe abbaſſato il di ſopra, o ſolleſſato il di ſotto, eglino ſi combacierebbono colla pia ſcrupoloza eſattezza. Voi vedete, che queſta oſſervazione non poteva reſtare del tutto ſterile, ella conduce a qualche coſa un uomo, che non per nulla ſiaſi internato fra quelle tenebre. L'acqua che raddoppia l'incomodo del cammino in quel ſito, e ſ'apre ſotterra di naſcoſto una via per calare nel burone non oſſervata, dovea venire da

da qualche parte. Di fatto, posti in libertà d'alzare la testa, ci trovammo in un luogo alto, ma angusto, e voltici adjetro vedemmo, che lungo il masso scendeva l'acqua tacitamente, incrostando il suo cammino quasi perpendicolare di tartaro impuro. Avanzammo e doppio breve viaggio per quella spezie d'andito, le di cui pareti logore mostrano a scoperto una gran quantità d'entroceti, e d'altre minute produzioni di mare, giunfimo ad una galleria spaziosa, quasi rotonda seminata di massi capovolti. Il vano superiore, che ascendendo s'interna nelle viscere del monte non é però proporzionato a que' materiali, che pur d'alto cuddero certamente ci arrampicammo con qualche difficoltà fu per que gran rottami a destra; il limo, ond'errano lordi ci facea sdruciolare; io riflettei, che non ispregevole volume d'acqua lutulente dovea passare di là, se giungeva a sommergere que gran sassi; quest'acqua si perde sotterraneamente. Sermontati i massi ci si affacciò un cammino angusto di molto, cioè non più largo di tre piedi all'incirca; mi venne in capo di badare se le due pareti di quella catacomba si corrispondeffero nel modo medesimo in cui già addietro si corrispondono la volta e il suolo. Mi sembro che né grandi angoli, e nelli più osservabili curvature v'avesse una corrispondenza perpendicolare, analosa a quella orizzontale ch'io avea tocata con mano. Temendo ci mancasse il tempo per arrivare la sera a Paese abitato vitro cedemmo; io restai col dispiacere di non aver potuta veder il fine di quel sotterraneo, ma colla soddisfazione d'aver veduto quanto bastava. Forse andando bene innanzi s'avrebbe trovato qualche atra spezie d'abitatori di quella notte eterna oitre a pipistrelli. Voi sapete che nelle acque de cavolli d'costoza v'hanno de viventi, che mai vedono sole ne Luna. Feci con iscarfezza eguale di tempo il secondo viaggio al ponte di Veja col nostro amabilissimo signor S. e molte cose potei

potei offervare oltre a quelle ch'io avea notate nel primo : ma non ispinzi piu oltre il camino sotterraneo. Nel uscire da quella Bocea portai l'occhio fu d'un distico fatta scrivere nel masso vicino alla di lei bocca ; le lettere nesaranno in breve smarrite. Eccolo.

Si tantum dum ludit opus natura peregit  
Quid faciet proprio docta majesterio.

E da ringraziarsi la providenza, che non sia stato scolpito, come ha creduto il Sig. Betti, che atorto ha lodato questi due versi puerili ; e così poco latini, io non la posso perdonare a coloro, che della natura fanno un pulcinella, e mi sembrano ancora piu condannevoli del Robinet, che ama di mandarla alla scuola, e la fa imparare dell'eternita fino attempo nostro a far l'vomo. La natura non fa cos'alcuna o tentomi, o per ischerzare, e io non vorrei si proferisce in questo secolo una si fatta bestemmia in cattivi versi ne in prosa. Egli e vero, che v'hanno alcune teste, alcuni caratteri, alcuni cuori così stramanente Luvorati, che sembrano fatti al bujo o per ischerzo : ma i buoni, e ragionevoli filosofanti oggimai fanno benissimo, che le stravolte idea d'un vomo sono necessariamente legate alle consequenti, e adegnate d'un altro, che il Polipo invisibile ha la sua necessitá esistenza relativa all'esistere della Balena, e la pulce leggiera ha la sua parentela di questo genere coll' elefante. Non v'ha cosa nel mondo, per quanto disparata sembri dall'altre, che lo sia infatti ; e le leggi regolatrici di quel che ci pare stravaganza quantunque ricorrenti men di sovente sono egualmente costanti che le direttrici degli avvenimenti piu ordinarij, o forse sono combinazioni, e risultati delle medesime. Parrebbe che agli uomini convenisse lo studiarli l'intendere la cagione delle cose che destano la loro sorpresa e che dopo d'aver fatto ogni sforzo senza profitto (come purtroppo sovente accade)

accade) dovessero confessarsi ingenuamente non atti apenetrare ne misterj della natura. Nel caso però del ponte non v'ha d'uopo, che ci umiliano la natura, che non ischerza giammai, e nasconde spesso all'umana penetrazione le leggi che s'e prescritti nell'operare, non lo ha fatto a Veia.

L'eruditissimo Sigr Betti riferisce due opinioni altrui intorno alla formazione di quell' arco, e stabilisce poscia la sua, che partecipa d'entrambe il celebre amico nostro Sigr Capitan Lorgna lo ha creduto un lavoro delle piogge, che fra gli strati meno compatti aprendosi apoco apoco il passaggio, e profittando della sconnessione di alcuno di essi, scomposero la base degl'immediatamente sopra stanti, i quali per conseguenza fendutisi lasciarono libero ad altre acque il cammino; e coll' andar degli anni di se qui liberati del tutto si lasciarono rovesciar finalmente. Chiunque ha un po di patrica della strattora attuale dé monti troverá molto ragionevole questo parere, amzi il sole che sia incontestabilmente ragionevole, e piano V'hanno per avventura poche divisioni fra le montagne epoche valli, per quanto sian elleno vaste, che non si debbano al tardo Lavoro dell'acque. La corrispondenza degli strati, che si vede girare regolarmente d'intorno alle pianure chiuse da monti, é una prova incontestabile d'antica continuitá. Di questa fatta di corrispondenze da un braccio all' altro di monti veggonsene bene spesso costeggiando gl'Appennini fra Bologna e Firenze. E fra quella fortunata cittá dove passai giorni si lieti, e Siena, dove ho tanti dotti amici, Colli di Vald' Elsa hanno dall'una all'altra parte perfetta corrispondenza di strati formati da ciottoli fluttati. Poc' acqua basta ad aprire un passaggio fra strato, e strato, dove sovente ritrovasi materia atta a dissoluzione come la creta, o a scomposizione come la breccia e i ciottoli non ben comentati dalla stalattite.

I tremuoli.

I tremuoli ponno aver contribuito ad accelerare gli avvallamenti, scuotendo vasti letti petrosi prioi di sostegno, e tenuti, fermi soltanto dalla forte coesione delle lor parti atta per qualche tempo a render vana la tendenza d'un peso enorme. E quando dico per qualche tempo io non intendo di mesi, o di anni, ma di quanto e combinabile colla struttura interiore, col carico superiore, colla resistenza delle aggiacenze piu omeno suscettibili d'alterazioni. Ne perche l'acque s'aprono per le viscere di tutti i monti passaggi, e raro s'incontrano di cosi magnifiche arcate, si dee esitare ad attribuirne a logoramenti loro l'origine. Aspettiamo prima di ben conoscere la Natura de varj suoli, che formano l'interiore delle montagne né differenti paesi; e quando saremo sicuri d'aver trovate un luogo del tutto simile a un altro, potremo sgridare la natura s' ella v' avrà operato in maniera diversa.

Io mi ricordo d'aver veduto in Istria, e particolarmente nel Territorio di Pola una quantita sorprendente d'avvallamenti di figura somigliantima a quella d'una Arena; gli strati all'intorno vi servono come di gradini, e, con simmetria non del tutto rozza, o indegna di riflesso, quelle grandi bocche circolari si vanno restringendo verso il fondo aguisa d'un cono tronco rovesciato. In quelle piccole archi, dove concorrono le foglie, e lapoca terra del circondario sogliono gl' abitanti seminare con profitto. Le acque dell Istria si perdono quasi istantaneamente doppo le piogge per vie sotterranie e non vi sono comuni i torrenti, come per monti nosari, né quali é meno frequente l'alternagione degli strati cretosi. Questo smarrimento quasi subitaneo dell' acque piovine é tutto ad un tratto la cagione della siccita, dacui e pur troppo sovente afflitta quella Penisola, e delle innumerabili voragini, e avvallamenti che vi s'incontrano. Doppo d'aver bene esaminata l'interna struttura del paese,

io.

io trovai molto conseguente l'operate della gran mastra. Mi risovviene d'aver pensato, trovandomi in quel paese, che gli abitanti aveano forse potuto far uso di sì fatti Anfiteatri naturali prima di averne d'altra sorte; o che forse dopo d'aver fatto riflesso all' uso che sene potea fare, ne aveano eseguiti in più picciola forma i modelli nelle città. Io sono dunque costantemente d'opinione, che l'acqua (se in poca o in molta quantità non lo saprei dire, ma certamente in non pochi secoli) abbia travolto, e spezzato tutto quel gran pietrame, che riempieva la Vasca, o Vallicelle che sta dietro al ponte di Veja, per di sotto al quale in qualunque modo si voglia deve essere uscito. Credo dimostrato, che l'acqua medesima abbia portato sico, e stritolato tutto ciò che formava la continuazione degli strati al di fuori a destra, e a sinistra dell' arco, e si congiungeva con que massi che gli sono dirimpetto. E finalmente tengo per fermo, che fosse tutto d'un pezzo quel tratto di paese ora intersecato da buroni, e torrentelli, le sommità del quale mostrano una corrispondenza parallela, e orizzontale pochissimo inclinata; poichè stimo un osservatore debba essere meno avoro di secoli, i quali ajutino il tardo Lavoro d'una causa semplice, che di congetture composte, ed intralciate.

L'opinione di coloro che credono quel ponte fatto di prima creazione dalla natura, non merita confutazione; ella si dee mettere co' sogni di quelli, a quali sembrano scherzi o moltiplicazioni primitive di forme ipesci, i testacei, e le piante fossili. Se questa razza di gente, che regnò un tempo nelle seccole, dove spiegava comodamente la maggior parte delle cose astratte colla natura scherzante, o colla volenta primitiva di Dio Creatore, non fosse un poco scemata di numero per dar luogo a genj meno poltroni, le scienze, e l'arti, e ogni sorta d'umane cognizioni farrebbersi poco inoltrate.

Per.

Per quello poi riguarda ill parere del Celeb. Sigr Betti, che stimar possa essere stato quel grand arco una porzione di ampia caverna, ad esempio delle due laterali lasciata vuota dalla natura, che in quello studiosissimo sito pare si sia diletтата di scarpellare a gran vani, direi, che se d'ogni fenomeno s' adduceffero origini simili, faremo sempre da capo. Supposta la gran caverna (d'onde potrebbe anche aver avuta una profima origine il ponte) resta a chiedere da chi ella sia stata Scavata, edove sieno andati i materiali, che servirono a continuare glistratti superiori, e inferiori della Vallicella, ed el ponte. Fara d'uopo ricorrere al nostro compiacentissimo ed amabile Capitan Lorgna, perche ci presti quell operatore filo d'acqua, e le giffre da calcolare gli anni necessari a un lavoro si grande. Non e supponibile che dalle mani della natura, primitivamente sia uscito quel vano; poiche primitiva opera della natura non sono que sassi ne quali si osservano pre fespoglie di mare, come nautili, Cornammoni, Entrochiti, Asterie colonari, &c. ne si puo dire, che nella decantazione di quelle materie vi siano restati de vani, senz' addurre di bon raggioni, o esserne stati testimoni oculari. I vulcani, i tremuoti, le acque le combinazioni, egli anni, cioe gli operaj della natura sono quelli che scavano le caverne, e le riempiono alternativamente: io rispetto troppo la Madre comune per affomigliarla ad una donnicciuola, che fa ilpane, e si diverte a far de buchi, o dé rilievi nella pasta molli, e so poi di certo, che il nostro pianeta nonpuo essere stato cosi alla lettera al tempo della formazione delle caverne una pasta molle. Quindi sono ben lontano da cio, che pende a credere l'elegante illustratore del ponte di Veja. Egli "osservando la frequenza delle" grotte, di cui non v' ha per cosi dire paese che non vanti la sua, e non ne "esageri la bellezza, credette di doverne quasi necessariamente dedurre, ch" eleno  
"sono

“sono una conseguenza del modo con cui si formarono i monti fin da principio.” Io confesso la mia inperizia; monti, chesi possano francamente chiamare formati fin da principio, non ho peranche veduti, equanti m'accadde di vederne portano i segni plutonici, o del tridente, o dell'una o dell'altra forza ad un tempo. E avvertano gli assertori di opinioni analoghe, che se nel giorno in cui si divisero l'acque dalla terra, giusta il Genesi, per opera del fuoco sotterraneo qualche cavita nelle argille non per anche indurate potea formarsi (cosa di cui e facile ascrivere in astratto, ma pero malagevole a provarsi la possibilita in casi determinati) le caverne di veja non ponno essere del numero. Il Celeb. Sigr Betti non ha forse avuto campo da riflettere, che quelle acque doveano essere per anche disabitate; poichè furono creati doppo il giorno della divisione, giusta il citato libro sacro, quelli animali, le spoglie da quali formano principalmente l'ossatura de monti Veronesi d'origine Mavina, e di Veja in particolare

Or voi che ne dite,

Maestro di color che fanno?

Io vi scrivo tutta questa cialata, perche rettificiate quanto v'ha di mal pensato; sono disposittissimo a lasciarmi correggere da chi ne fa del mestiere quanto voi: del resto de giudici non competenti v'immaginerete ch'io non cerco i suffraggi.

L'acqua che passa sotto il ponte mezzo coperto cade nel buvone da forse cento piedi d'altezza; il fabro, ond ella precipita, serve come di grondaja a una vasta cavita, che merita particolare menzione. Poco sotto a quello strato che sta cosi in aria, vedesi un arco assai minore del gia descritto, ma senza pareaire piu architettonico. Egli avra da 50 a 55 piedi di corda, ed e sostenuto da due pilastri alti circa 90. Quest'arco, e questi gran pilastri, formano l'ingresso della caverna, che ascende.

cende ma non s' interna di molto, ella ha la volta maestrevolmente rotondata a foggia di cupola, cui serve di tetto il piano sottto posto al ponte. Dinanzi a quest' apertura fa come un velo l'acqua cadente, e vi move un accretta, che farà gentil in tempo di state. In questo luogo ho veduto con sorpresa varj ciottoli di l'acca nera, e pezante, senza che d'intorno abbia potuto scoprire lo strato, o la fenditura, d'onde vennero. E pero importante osservazione quella, che ne avrete esservi stato un Vulcano anticamente in poca distanza, e forse immediatamente sotto il ponte di Veja.

Scendendo per abbandonare il ponte, appena abbimo fattti pochi passi, che a destra vidimo un burroncello, in capo al quale v' hanno pur archi, e caverne e caduta d'acqua, ed elementi d'un ponte futuro sullo stesso piano dell' altro. A destra e a sinistra dell' alveo veggonsi molti antri, e scilla vetta strana frastagliature di ciglioni, e rovine scogliose.

Lasciatoci'l ponte di Veja, e il di lui successore presuntivo alle spalle, ci avviammo a lugo, ora caminando per torrente, ora costeggiandolo. Non molto lungi dal ponte, si trova il cammino coperto per tratto di molti passi da uno strato, che sporge in fuori forse tre braccia. L'oscurità, che si colse per qué deserti, non mi avea permesso nel primo viaggio d'osservare le variazioni de' corfi petrosi a misura, che ci accostavamo al piano, ma nel secondo l'ora mi fu piu favorevole. Vidi scoperto nel letto del torrente, in cui si scarica il burroncello di Veja, uno stratto assai profondo di lumachella, cioè un ammasso di bivalvi d'una sola spezie, appartenente, secon ogni apparenza, al genere delle ostraciti, di cui é sconosciuto totalmente l'originale Marino. Queste Lumachelle congiurano colle Nummularie, coi cornammoni, colle Grifiti, e con parecchie altre spezie di fossili a far che gli Orrittologi saltino apie pare una  
quantita

quantità di argini fattizij, ed escano a cavalchioni del Globo fuori de confini, ne quali egli è costretto a griare presentemente.

Si ponno osservare nello scendere per quella Valle poche varietà sostanziali negli strati; eglino sono alternativamente Rosso, o Bianco di Verona, Breccie, e Lumachelle. A un miglio in circa dal ponte, nel luogo detto la busa, sopra il molino, la strada passa fra due Massi incinati l'uno verso Paltro, e distanti intorno a 70 piedi. Le due faccie di essi, che si guardano, sono incrostrate dall'alto al basso di strie stalagmitiche, che mostrano essere eglino anticamente stati porzione d'un grand arco, o di una gran caverna; chi cavasse sotto la strada troverebbe il resto. Uno de due massi l'isolato; entrambi sono impastati di breccia. La natura si compiacque in qué contorni di far iscavare dalle acque spelonche, ed archi. Nello scogliere che s'alsano perpendicolarmente rimpetto a lago, v'hanno molte caverne ridotte ad uso di case provvisori-ali dagli abitanti. Eleno hanno la bocca ben murata, e porta, e finestre. Per quale strada vi vadano que Montagnaj, io non ve lo diro; perche.

“ Vassi in san Leo, e discendessi in Nolo

“ Montasi fu Bismantova in cacume

“ Con esso i pie: ma qui convien che vuom voli.

Forse l'interiore della Corsica, e di Monte Negro e ben provveduto di fissatti alberghi, e quindi e così difficile il penetrarvi. Prima di giungere alla chiesa di laso osservai ne sassi vicini alle case de Bellori grande abbondanza di Terebratole, e di quel curioso ostracite che lo Spada ha figurato T. IX.

A Lugo riposai nel primo mio viaggio la notte, e nel secondo ci volea costringere a far il medesimo la cortesia ospitalissima di quel Reverendissimo Arciprete; di fronte alla di lui casa v'ha un ciglione magnifico; io pensai, che prima di montare a cavallo mi corresse un doverere d'andarlo a visitare.

visitare. Vándiedi in fatti ; e per non perdere di troppo tempo mi vi aggrappai a quattro gambe per la piu ripida, e impraticabile, preferendola come la piu corta. Vi raccolsi tanta quantità, e varietà di Corna, d'Ammone, che gia vicino alla metà cioè alla sommità, dove m'era prefisso di giungere, io non avea piu fiato ; fuio costretto a deporre qualche pajo de Maggiori, e un gran sasso che da ogni parte ne ha bellissime impressioni. Quando mi resolvero di fare una Collegione per me, li andero a disepellire con parachij altri tesori simili ; ehio ho sparfi de Monti Vicentini, e fu gli Euganei. In questi ultimi ho un deposito dello stesso genere fatto dieci o undeci anni sono ; lo che prova la lunga età, e l'incurabilità del mio male. Al di sotto di que ciglioni v'è una spelonca molto opportunamente scavata in luogo, dove la pioggia farebbe una strana burla, se vi sorprendesse un galantuomo. Ella ha quattro aperture ragionevolmente grandi, il suo diametro e di trenta piedi all'incirca ; la volta rusticamente ineguale, ma intorno a quindici piedi alta. S'entra da una sola parte a sinistra ; a Greco Levante v'ha l'ingresso maggiore fatto come un portone di casa ; di sopra ha una specie di finestra ovale ; da quel portone non s'entra, perche il ciglione, in cui fu aperto, e tagliato apiombo. Dalla parte opposta a queste apperture ve ne un'altra, quasi nel tetto, orizzontale, d'onde esce probabilmente l'acqua per isgonbrare quel ricovero da orsi. Sotto questo buco v'ha una fenditura perpendicolare nel masso larga due piedi, longa otto in dieci. A destra di essa, contiguo all'ingresso praticabile, v'ha un gabinetto molto acconciamente scavato. In questa spelonca restarono i nostri nomi scritti nel sito pia asciutto ; io non farei lontano dall'abitarvi per qualche mese in persona. Quegli farebbe un luogo a proposito per lavorare nel mia tenebroso ed alpestre

pestre Poema. Da lugo a Verona non trovaj cosa che fermasse la mia attenzione.

Eccevi pasuto una specie di tributo, ch' io credo dovervi, come archimandrita degli orittologi nostri. Ricevetelo con quella amicizia con cui trattate me stesso. Io non mi lusingo di poter fare altrettanto di tempo in tempo, come avrei pur voluto, essendo persuaso, che convenisse ad un amatore della storia Naturale il conoscer bene quella del proprio paese prima di pensar ad esaminare gli altrai.

Credetemi costantemente animato da qué Sentimenti, che meritate e per conseguenza,

Vostro Servitore ed Amico, &c.

GENERAL

# GENERAL INDEX

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